

**SAINT PATRICK:  
APOSTLE OF  
IRELAND IN THE  
THIRD CENTURY....  
WITH AN...**

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R Steele Nicholson





SAINT PATRICK,  
APOSTLE OF IRELAND  
IN THE  
Third Century.

SAINT PATRICK:  
APOSTLE OF IRELAND

IN THE THIRD CENTURY;

THE STORY OF HIS MISSION BY POPE CELESTINE IN A.D. 431,  
AND OF HIS CONNEXION WITH THE CHURCH OF ROME  
PROVED TO BE A MERE FICTION:

WITH AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

HIS CONFESSION AND EPISTLE TO COROTICUS,

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH.

BY

R. STEELE NICHOLSON, M.A., T.C.D.

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## SAINT PATRICK.

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**T**HE history and antiquities of Ireland have of late years attracted an unusual amount of attention : of that history, the introduction of Christianity must always form the most important portion ; and, connected with the introduction of Christianity, St. Patrick must always occupy the most prominent position, and whatever relates to him will always form a most interesting study.

The history of the Saint is wrapped in so much mystery, and is surrounded by such a dense mist of fable and falsehood, that any attempt to dispel that mist, and to introduce the light emanating from a better acquaintance with the ancient records of Ireland—which, thanks to the learned men of the present day, are now open to every one—should be regarded as praiseworthy service in the cause of historical truth.

The numerous lives of the Saint written in the eighth century (we have no account of any of an earlier date, excepting one called the "Hymn of Fiech," supposed to have been written in the sixth century) were so full of fable and fiction, that they could only be regarded as mere legends. The learned historian Gibbon says, "The sixty-six lives of St. Patrick which were extant in the ninth century must have contained as many thousand lies."\* All these lives, with the exception of four which have been preserved to our times, are supposed to have been destroyed by the Norwegians and Danes during the period of their incursions into, and partial occupation of, the island—a circumstance which we can only regret in so far as it involves the certainty of the destruction of many valuable records and documents connected with the true history

\* Vol. V., p. 228, Note.

of Ireland in general, and of St. Patrick in particular. These four lives, so preserved, have formed the groundwork of three more lives of the Saint, which, like those whence they derive their origin, are so full of fable and fiction, that in the estimation of most writers of acknowledged learning and judgment—both Protestant and Roman Catholic—no reliance whatever can be placed on them as historical documents, further than this, that many of the incidents recorded in them as having happened in the life of the Saint, may be, and probably are, in the main true, and founded on facts which really occurred in the course of his life and missionary labours.\*

The statements made by the annalists and writers of acknowledged authority concerning the Saint are equally unsatisfactory. They are so contradictory, and so inconsistent with each other, some of them so clearly false, and all of them taken together forming a story so incredible, and irreconcilable in its parts as a chronologically accurate narrative, all, if combined, spreading the duration of his life over the incredible space of 132 years,—that some very learned men have been led, not only to question, but even to deny altogether, the existence of such a person as St. Patrick, and to treat him as a purely fabulous personage. This is not without good reason, as there is scarcely a single fact related of him that is not wholly irreconcilable with some other facts recorded of him by the same parties;—whilst there are in their statements such glaring inconsistencies and so many obviously flagrant discrepancies, that it is by no means surprising that the very learned and acute Dr. Ledwich and others have been led to deny his existence altogether. The simple solution of the question thus raised as to the existence of St. Patrick is, as the writer believes, and as he hopes to prove, that the Saint *did not exist during the period in which he was so reported to have lived*. Dr. Ledwich came to a perfectly sound and just conclusion, when he refused to give credit to the story of St. Patrick's life and mission in the fifth century; he only erred in so far as he denied his existence altogether.

In order to prove how absolutely irreconcilable are the statements of the chroniclers respecting St. Patrick, it is only necessary to quote from William of Malmesbury, who relates that the Saint returned from a successful mission to Ireland in A.D. 433, and took up his abode in Glastonbury, where he remained for the next and

\* See "History of The Church in Ireland," by Robert King, A.B.

last thirty-nine years of his life, and died there in the year 472 at the age of 111 years; and was buried in the old Church of Glas-tonbury, "of which he was the first abbot, and the Apostle of Ireland:"—and from the "Annals of Ulster," and the "Annals of Ireland by the Four Masters," both of which agree in the statement that the Saint commenced his labours as a Missionary in Ireland in the year 432, and that he died, according to the former of these authorities, in A.D. 492, and according to the latter, in A.D. 493, and was buried at Dun-dalethglas, now called Downpatrick. We have thus his birth fixed by one chronicler to the year 361; and his death, by another, to the year 493—thus extending his life between them over the intermediate space of 132 years; and we have the successful *termination* of his mission recorded by the first-cited authority at the same date, as the two latter give for the *commencement* of his labours as a Christian Missionary. Numerous instances of equally conflicting statements might be adduced, which it is unnecessary to introduce here, as the writer may find occasion to refer to them hereafter.

That learned scholar and antiquary, the late Sir William Betham, was the first person who propounded a rational theory on the subject. The conclusion at which he arrived, after a close examination of ancient records, was, that Ireland had been Christianised by St. Patrick long before the year 432, the date assigned by most of the annalists and the writers of his Lives for the commencement of his labours in Ireland. For his arguments in support of his opinion, the reader is referred to his "*Antiquarian Researches*."

The conclusion to which the writer of the following pages has come, is, that St. Patrick commenced his labours as a Christian Missionary in Ireland nearly two centuries before the year 432, the date usually, but incorrectly, assigned to that event. That, about that time—viz., in 431—Palladius was ordained a bishop by Pope Celestine, and sent to the Irish people, not for the purpose of converting them to Christianity, but for the purpose of attempting to bring them, then a Christian people, into the pale of the Church of Rome:—that the Popes, successors of Celestine, during the remainder of the fifth century, sent over several other persons with the same object in view:—that Palladius and his successors, emissaries of the Church of Rome, founded several monasteries in Ireland in connection with their Church:—and that, in process of time, and

after the lapse of some centuries—the monasteries being in those days the only seats of learning, and the monks being the only writers—it occurred to some members of those fraternities holding communion with the Church of Rome, in their zeal for, and attachment to, that Church, to arrogate for a missionary of it the conversion of the Irish people, and to ascribe the merit of that great work to a member of her communion, and so claim the gratitude of the Irish people for their conversion from paganism: and in order to effect that purpose they originated, in the eighth or ninth century, those fabulous lives of the Saint, which were afterwards perfected, so to speak, in the twelfth century, when the Irish Church was, by the power of King Henry II., forced into full communion with the Church of Rome. After that period all the records and documents connected with the history of Ireland fell into the hands of the adherents and partisans of that Church, and so remained for several centuries, during which time they had full opportunity and power of moulding the ecclesiastical history of Ireland so as to suit their own views. It is well known that the English invaders, regarding Ireland as a conquered country, and the Irish as enemies, destroyed unsparingly all Irish writings which fell into their hands: and it is equally certain that Roman Catholic ecclesiastics, amongst whom were many Englishmen, especially in the higher orders, and in places of power and authority, did not permit any records which militated in any way against the interests of their Church, or their own preconceived ideas of church history, to remain in existence. Thus were originated, and afterwards brought to completion, those false and fabulous lives of the Saint, and the fiction of his mission from Rome, with the consequent date of that mission, depending on that of Palladius,—a process in which were transferred from the real St. Patrick, not only all his missionary labours in the conversion of the Irish people to Christianity, but also his very name, and the traditions and records of his life, to Palladius and his successors—thus attributing the great and glorious work of the conversion of the Irish people, which was really effected by St. Patrick in the latter half of the *third* century, to several emissaries of the See of Rome who came to Ireland during the course of the *fifth* century. It is fortunate, however, for the interests of truth, that the story so fabricated presents so many inconsistencies and discrepancies, and relates so many circumstances and events which are incredible as having happened in the life of a single or

the same person. The records, for instance, assign not less than three distinct and widely separate dates for his death, which probably represent, in reality, the times of the deaths of three of the successors of Palladius, or, as Sir William Betham designates them, "Roman Patricks;" so that it is possible, though the task may be difficult, to extract the truth from the mass of falsehood which envelopes it.

The reader must not expect to find in the following pages a History or Life of St. Patrick; they have been written for the sole purpose of endeavouring to prove, so far as the case is now capable of proof, that the Saint came to Ireland, as has been already stated, nearly two centuries before the year 432—the date usually, but incorrectly, as the writer believes, assigned to that event. The history of the Saint has been touched upon only so far as is absolutely necessary to a clear statement of the arguments adduced in support of the writer's firm belief in the truth of that proposition.

The several writers of the Lives of St. Patrick and the historians vary so widely in their statements, so flatly contradict each other about the leading and most remarkable events in his life, and tell us so many things which are evidently untrue and incredible, that, like unfaithful witnesses, they have rendered themselves wholly unworthy of trust, and we can give credit only to such portions of their statements as come quite within the range of probability, or which are supported by the evidence afforded by those two documents—viz., his "Epistle to Coroticus," and his "Epistle to the Irish," commonly called his "Confession," which are now by common consent received and acknowledged to be the undoubted productions of the Saint. Upon the testimony given by these only can we rely with confidence. It is by them alone we must test the various histories of the Saint. Every statement which is found to be repugnant to their testimony must be discarded. Of the truth of any portion of the Lives of the Saint beyond and beside those facts which are recorded in these Epistles, or which correspond therewith, or which we can clearly infer therefrom, we have no proof whatever; and in the absence of direct proof, we can only, and must, decide upon the truth of any particular statement according to the probability of the case, viewed in connexion with all surrounding and concomitant circumstances.

Of many matters generally considered interesting in the lives of distinguished men, we have, in that of St. Patrick, no certain



information. We have no sure guide to enable us to determine with certainty either his parentage, his native country and the place of his birth, or the country and place from which he was led captive. The only certain knowledge which we possess on these subjects is to be gathered from his Epistles.

Concerning his parentage:—Calpornius his father is said by some to have been a Roman, by others a Gaul, and by others a Briton; it is, certainly, possible that he may have been either a Gaul or a Briton, but it appears much more probable that he was a Roman: he is mentioned by St. Patrick both in the Confession and in the Epistle. In the former he writes—"Ego Patricius, peccator rusticissimus, et minimus omnium fidelium, et contemptibilis sum apud plurimos, patrem habui Calpornium, Diaconum, filium quondam Potiti presbyteri, filii Odissi, qui fuit in vico Bannavem Taberniæ. Villulam enim prope habuit ubi ego capturam dedi,"\*—"I, Patrick, a sinner, who am the rudest, the most insignificant of all the faithful, and, in the estimation of very many people, even contemptible, had Calpornius, a Deacon, for my father, who was the son of Potitus, formerly a Presbyter, the son of Odissus, who lived in the village of Bannavem Taberniæ. For he had a little farm adjacent, where I was captured;"—and in the latter, he writes—"Ingenuus fui secundum carnem, Decorione patre nascor. Vendidi enim nobilitatem meam. Non erubescio, neque me pœnitet pro utilitate aliorum. Denique servus sum in Christo Jesu Domino nostro etsi mei me non cognoscunt,"†—"I was of honourable birth according to the flesh, my father being a Decurio. For I gave up my nobility. I do not blush on that account, neither do I regret it, as I did it for the benefit of others. In short, I am a servant in Christ Jesus our Lord, though my relatives, for that reason, shun my acquaintance." In the former of these quotations, Calpornius is called a "deacon;" in the latter, a "decurio." As much controversy has arisen as to which of these words is the correct reading, or which of these offices Calpornius really filled, or whether he might not have held both, it becomes necessary to devote a short space of time to the consideration of this question, which the writer does the more willingly, as there does not appear to him to be the slightest difficulty in the case, the latter quotation from the Epistle affording within itself full and clear proof

\* See Appendix A.

† See Appendix B.

of its own correctness and freedom from error. It is necessary here to premise that a Decurio was a magistrate in a Roman town or colony; he occupied the position of a senator in towns and colonies of the Roman Empire, similar to that held by senators in the City of Rome; and the office resembled, in some respects, that of alderman or town councillor in our corporate towns. This office, like most others among the Romans, could only be held by a person of Patrician rank, or of noble, as distinguished from plebeian, birth. When, therefore, St. Patrick asserts his noble birth, and adduces the fact of his father having been a decurio as the proof of it, his statement proves to demonstration that his father must have been a decurio. He lays his claim to noble birth as a consequence of his father having been a decurio, a consequence which would by no means have followed if he had held the office of a deacon, or Christian minister; this, in the days of St. Patrick, and in a Roman colony, instead of conferring honour or nobility, would have wrought, on the contrary, as he informs us it did in his own case, a total deprivation of it. If St. Patrick forfeited his title to nobility by becoming a Christian *bishop*, he certainly could not have inherited it from a Christian *deacon*.

The Roman was then the ruling power both in Gaul and Britain, and Patrick forfeited a nobility derived from the Romans, by embracing a religion which was not only proscribed by the State, but which rendered those who professed it liable to be treated as the worst of criminals, and to forfeit every thing including life itself.

If Calpornius had been a native of Gaul or Britain, and, being accounted noble amongst his own people, had held the office of a deacon, how was it possible for his son to forfeit his nobility by becoming a bishop? It is, therefore, certain that Calpornius was a magistrate of a Roman colony either in Gaul or Britain, and, moreover, that he lived at a period in the history of the Roman Empire when the Christian religion was proscribed by the laws of the State, and the open profession of it treated as a crime, and that he was not a deacon. It is, no doubt, possible that he may have secretly acted as the deacon of a Christian congregation; but of this we have no evidence whatever. It is far more probable that the word "Diaconum," in the Confession, was written by a mistake of the scribe instead of "Decurionem;" and we can come to this conclusion the more readily, because we know that the

original document, written, as is believed, by St. Patrick's own hand, was,—when the copy of it, which is preserved in the Book of Armagh, was made in the eighth century,—in many places much obliterated and not legible, as is evident from the repeated remark, made by the scribe who copied it, of “*Incertus liber hic* :”—“The book (writing) uncertain here.”

We have other reasons for believing that he was of Roman lineage. In the Confession, St. Patrick writes—“*Quapropter olim cogitavi scribere, sed et usque nunc hæsitavi. Timui enim ne inciderem in linguam hominum. Quia non 'didici sicut et cæteri qui optime itaque jure et sacras literas utroque pari modo combiberunt, et sermones illorum ex infantia nunquam mutarunt, sed magis ad perfectum semper addiderunt. Nam sermo et loquela nostra traslata est in linguam alienam, sicut facile potest probari ex saliva scripturæ meæ.*”—“Wherefore I formerly thought to write, but hesitated even until now. For I feared lest I should fall under the censure of men, because I did not learn as others, who, being taught in the best manner, therefore rightly, in every way, both drank in sacred learning in a proper manner, and never changed their language from childhood, but rather constantly added to its perfection. For my language and speech is translated into a foreign tongue, as may be easily observed from the homely style of my writing.”

It is evident that St. Patrick is here framing an excuse for his incorrect mode of writing the Latin language,—or, as he calls it, “the homely style of his writing ;” and he gives as a reason for his incapacity and inferiority to others in that respect, that they had never “changed their language from childhood.” The only meaning that we can take from this, and the only inference which it is possible to draw from it, is, that he had himself “changed his language from childhood.” He gives us here very clearly to understand not only that he used, in after life, a language different from that which he spoke when a boy, but also that his language during boyhood had been the Latin, and that it was in consequence of the change at an early period in his life that he had lost the perfect use of it, and had not, like others who had never “changed their language from childhood,” “constantly added to its perfection.” When and where, then, did this change take place? We know that in those days the same, or very nearly the same, language was spoken in Gaul, Britain, and Ireland, the inhabitants of

those countries, with the exception of the Roman legions and colonists, being members of the great Celtic tribe or race. If Calpornius and his son Patrick were natives of either Gaul or Britain, where, when, and how could the latter have "changed his language from childhood?" The only change that it was possible for him to make was from Latin to Celtic: the language, then, of Patrick in his boyhood must have been the Latin. We know, certainly, that it was the custom and policy of the Romans to admit many natives of their provinces to offices of honour and trust; but if Calpornius, being a native of either Gaul or Britain, had been admitted to the magistracy, it would be most extraordinary, scarcely credible indeed, that the Latin language should be alone spoken in his household, to the entire exclusion of his native and the popular language. It is evident then, nay, almost certain, that the change of language alluded to by St. Patrick took place on his being brought captive to Ireland. If the change took place at an earlier period of his life, it would tend to prove that his father, having been a native of Rome or Italy, had accompanied a Roman legion or colony in some military or civil capacity, and that young Patrick's first step towards a change of language took place on his settlement in the province.

It is evident, too, that St. Patrick in thus addressing Coroticus and his Roman soldiery, and alluding, as he does elsewhere in the same epistle, to his Roman citizenship, intended that they should regard him as a Roman, and expected to influence them by pleading his Roman lineage, which he certainly would not have been justified in doing if he had been a mere Gaul or Briton.

Having concluded my observations upon the evidence by means of which we are enabled to form an opinion upon the subject of St. Patrick's parentage, I must now beg the reader to return with me to a further consideration of the passage already quoted from the Epistle to Coroticus, and, as it appears to me to be all-important to the object of this work, it is here repeated:—"I was of honourable birth according to the flesh, my father being a Decurio. For I gave up my nobility. I do not blush on that account, neither do I regret it, as I did it for the benefit of others. In short, I am a servant in Christ Jesus our Lord, though my relatives, for that reason, shun my acquaintance." St. Patrick here tells us in the plainest possible language, that, by embracing openly the Christian religion, he had forfeited his civil rights as a

citizen and subject of the Roman Empire, under which we know that he lived, and that he had, by so doing, incurred the displeasure of his relatives. This statement of St. Patrick appears to the writer to be sufficient of itself to determine beyond all controversy, or the possibility of a doubt on the subject, the time at which he lived. We know that during the first three centuries of our era the Christian religion was proscribed by the laws of Rome throughout that empire, the profession of it regarded as a crime of the deepest dye, and its adherents liable to punishment in every form, even in that of death itself. We know also that the first edict of toleration of that religion was issued in A.D. 311, by the Emperor Galerius, who had himself in the early part of his reign put the laws in force against the Christians and persecuted them even to the death. That edict, as it sets forth very fully and clearly the position occupied by the Christians previous to that date, and forms the most indisputable proof on the subject, is here given, copied from Gibbon.\* After a pompous recital of the imperial titles, it proceeds thus :—"Among the important cares which have occupied our mind for the utility and preservation of the empire, it was our intention to correct and re-establish all things according to the ancient laws and public discipline of the Romans. We were particularly desirous of reclaiming, into the way of reason and nature, the deluded Christians, who had renounced the religion and ceremonies instituted by their fathers ; and presumptuously despising the practice of antiquity, had invented extravagant laws and opinions according to the dictates of their fancy, and had collected a various society from the different provinces of our empire. The edicts which we have published to enforce the worship of the gods, having exposed many of the Christians to danger and distress, many having suffered death, and many more, who still persist in their impious folly, being left destitute of any public exercise of religion, we are disposed to extend to those unhappy men the effects of our wonted clemency. We permit them therefore freely to profess their private opinions, and to assemble in their conventicles without fear or molestation, provided always that they preserve a due respect to the established laws and government. By another rescript we shall signify our intentions to the judges and magistrates ; and we hope that our indulgence will engage the Christians to offer up their prayers to

\* "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," Vol II., Ch. XVI.

the deity whom they adore, for our safety and prosperity, for their own, and for that of the republic." This, the first edict of toleration of the Christian religion, was, as I have already mentioned, issued by the Emperor Galerius in A.D. 311; his successor, the Emperor Constantine, followed it up by protecting the Christians, issuing another general edict of toleration in their favour in A.D. 324, by himself adopting Christianity, and finally by establishing it as the religion of the State. St. Patrick therefore *must* have lived before the year 311. His writings leave us scarcely room for a doubt of the truth of the fact that he lived at a time when the profession of Christianity brought nothing with it but degradation, social and civil, and, as the Emperor Galerius writes, "danger and distress." In the passage already quoted he writes,—"*contemptibilis sum apud plurimos.*"—"I am, in the estimation of most people, contemptible,"—and in that now under consideration, he writes,—"*mei me non cognoscunt,*"—"my relatives shun my acquaintance:" again he writes in the Epistle,—"*Patricius peccator, indoctus scilicet, Hiberione constitutum Episcopum me esse fateor.* Certissime reor, a Deo accepi id quod amo. Inter barbaros itaque habito proselytus et profuga, ob amorem Dei. Testis est ille, si ita est: non quod optabam tam dure et tam aspere ex ore meo effundere, sed cogor zelo Dei et veritatis Christi, excitavit me pro dilectione proximorum atque filiorum, pro quibus tradidi patriam et parentes, et animam meam usque ad mortem, si dignus sum."—"I, Patrick, a sinner, and indeed unlearned, acknowledge that I have been appointed a Bishop in Ireland. I most certainly believe that it is the gift of God that I am what I am. And so I dwell amongst barbarians a proselyte and an exile, for the love of God. He is my witness, that it is so: it is not my wish to utter so many harsh and severe things, but I am constrained by my zeal for God and for the truth of Christ, which stimulated me through a love of my neighbours and sons, for whom I have given up my country and parents, and even my life itself to death, if I be worthy:" and further on in the same Epistle,—"*Numquid sine Deo, vel secundum carnem Hiberione veni? Quis me compulsi alligatus Spiritu, ut non videam aliquem de cognatione mea?*"—"Whether did I come to Ireland without God, or according to the flesh? Who compelled me, constrained by the Spirit, that I should give up all intercourse with my kindred?" He thus commences his letter to Coroticus, as if he were pleading guilty to some criminal charge;

he "confesses" that he is a Christian bishop, and pleads his sin and ignorance as some sort of excuse for it. He says that he dwells among "barbarians"—a name given by the Romans to the natives of all countries lying outside their own dominions, and which, it is evident, was used by him on this occasion in that sense, as a Roman would use it, as it is by no means likely that he meant to insult the Irish people :—he calls himself "a proselyte and a fugitive ;"—the use of the term "proselyte" here proves that he must have been the first of his family who became a Christian, and affords additional evidence to disprove the fact of his father having been a deacon : if he had been born of Christian parents—a Christian, he could not have called himself a "proselyte"—a convert. He also calls himself "an exile" or "fugitive," and further states, that "his relatives shun his acquaintance ;"—that he "had given up his country and parents," and "all intercourse with his kindred." If St. Patrick lived in the fifth century, how was it possible that he could have thus expressed himself? The Christian was then the established religion of the Roman Empire, and its bishops occupied positions of honour, dignity, and power, higher, perhaps, than they do at present, how then was it possible for him to forfeit his nobility by becoming a bishop? Why should his relatives have been incensed against him? How is it possible that he could have been a voluntary exile from his country and his kindred, when a day's sail would at any time have taken him over into Britain, where it is most probable that they resided ; or supposing that they dwelt in Gaal, a three days' sail would have taken him over to them? St. Patrick must have been a man of very warm affections : he appears to have felt very keenly the estrangement of his family and relatives, as he pleads how great a sacrifice he had made in giving them up. How, then, is it possible to give credit to a story so strange and inexplicable, as that during a residence of sixty years in Ireland he was a voluntary exile from his country, and never did devote a few weeks, or even a few days, to a visit to those relatives whose absence he seemed so much to deplore. The story is inconsistent and incredible. In times of persecution of the Church, it was not the poor and humble, but those who occupied the more prominent positions, who were in the greatest danger. The persecution of the Christians was by no means continuous ; it was regulated almost entirely by the temper and disposition of the reigning Emperor, and the Christians,

though at times they enjoyed an immunity from molestation, ever lived in a state of uncertainty as to the time when the laws might be actively put in force against them. At several periods of the third century, and even in the first decade of the fourth century, the Church suffered violent persecutions. St. Patrick, occupying the prominent position of a bishop, and a ringleader (as St. Paul was called before him), would have incurred a certain amount of danger by venturing to return either into Britain or Gaul. The banishment of St. Patrick from his country was not voluntary; he was just what he calls himself, "a fugitive" and "an exile"!

The place, or even the country, where St. Patrick was born is not known. Some assert that he was born in Britain; others that Gaul had the honour of being the place of his birth. Those who claim that honour for Britain do not agree among themselves as to the place; and there is a similar disagreement as to the place, amongst those who assert that he was born in Gaul. It is probable that he may have been born in either of those countries, and equally, if not more, probable, that he may have been born in neither of them.

Concerning the country and place from which young Patrick was led captive, we possess much better means for forming an opinion. It is certain that he was taken prisoner either in Gaul or Britain. My conjecture is, that St. Patrick was taken captive and brought to Ireland by King Cormac Ulfada (Longbeard) in the year 240. See "Annals of Ireland by the Four Masters," in which it is stated that "the fleet of Cormac sailed across Magh Rein (*i.e.*, across the sea) this year (240); so that it was on that occasion he obtained the sovereignty of Albà (Scotland)." By the expression, "obtained the sovereignty of Albà," in this passage, a perusal of the context will show that it was only meant that he obtained some very decided advantage over that country, or that his inroad was very successful. This grandiloquent style is not uncommon in Irish writers.

That St. Patrick was taken captive and brought to Ireland by an Irish expedition cannot admit of a doubt. In his Epistle to Coroticus he writes, "Numquid sine Deo, vel secundum carnem Hiberione veni? Quis me compulit alligatus Spiritu, ut non videam aliquem de cognatione mea? Numquid piam misericordiam ago erga gentem illam quæ me aliquando ceperunt, et devastaverunt servos et ancillas domus patris mei?" "Whether did I come



to Ireland without God, or according to the flesh? Who compelled me, constrained by the Spirit, that I should give up all intercourse with my kindred? Do I not exercise a pious mercy towards that nation which formerly took me captive, and destroyed the men-servants and maid-servants of my father's house?" It is unnecessary to make any comment on this passage: it is conclusive upon the point as to the people by whom he was made captive. Additional testimony (if it were required) to the truth of this fact is also found in the "Confession," where he states, "*et Hiberione in captivitate adductus sum cum tot millibus hominum;*"—"and I was led captive to Ireland along with many thousand men:"—it must have been an expedition on a very large scale, and also a very successful expedition, such as King Cormac's is described to have been, that could have succeeded in carrying off "many thousand captives;" and further, it is much more probable that it was an expedition from Ireland than from any other country, as it is more likely that an Irish expedition would carry home such a number of captives, than that any other people would carry such a very large number of captives for sale to Ireland.

It appears to be much more probable that young Patrick was brought captive from some place in the country now called Scotland, than that this event took place in Gaul. Tradition, and most historical accounts, favour that supposition; it being generally believed, and with good reason, that he was taken captive in the immediate vicinity of Alcluith (the Rock of Cluith), now called Dunbarton, on the Clyde: owing to the very slight hold which the Romans had at any time over that country, it was always the most easily assailable part of their province in Britain. Assuming the "Confession" to be an authentic document, of which there can scarcely be a doubt, it is, taken in connexion with the tradition, and with some historical accounts, almost conclusive upon the point as to the place where he was made captive. It is very improbable that an expedition ravaging the coasts of Gaul would have carried such a large number of captives direct to a place so far distant as Ireland; and it is also very improbable that they could have attacked so successfully any part of South Britain, or Gaul, and obtained such a very decided advantage over it, defended as those provinces were by the Romans.

Although the writer is of opinion that it is more probable that young Patrick was taken captive in North Britain than in

Gaul, yet there are some reasons which may be adduced as arguments in support of the belief that this event took place in the latter province. In the relation of his capture given by himself in his Confession he writes—"Et Dominus induxit super nos iram animationis suæ, et dispersit nos in gentibus multis, etiam usque ad ultimum terræ, ubi nunc parvitas mea esse videtur inter alienigenas,"—"and the Lord brought down upon us the anger of his Spirit, and dispersed us among many nations, even to the extremity of the earth, where my littleness was conspicuous among foreigners." Now if Patrick had only been removed from the neighbourhood of a town on the Clyde to a place in the country now called Antrim, in Ireland, it certainly does seem strange that he should call a removal of himself and his fellow-captives from any place on the Western coast of North Britain, into Ireland, as a "dispersion to the extremity of the earth." Looking at the map of Europe, North Britain looks as much, if not more, like an extremity of the earth, than does Hibernia. Again, in giving an account of his flight from the place of his bondage, about the site of which there is no reason to doubt, as it is agreed to by all parties and confirmed by tradition that it was in the neighbourhood of Slieve Mis in the now county of Antrim, he states that the ship in which he escaped was in a port at a distance of "ducenta millia passus,"—"two hundred Roman miles"—it must, therefore have been on the southern coast of Ireland; and as they were three days on the voyage, and, after landing, travelled for twenty-eight days through a desert, they must have landed in Gaul, as there is no other country which they could have reached in three days' sail from the South of Ireland except Britain, and had they landed in Britain they could not have travelled for twenty-eight days in any direct line through that island, not to mention the impossibility of their finding in it a desert of such extent as to occupy travellers for more than twenty-eight days in passing through it: St. Patrick, certainly, does not say that he was taking the direct route in search of his family and friends, but neither does he say that he was not.

There is another passage in his writings, which is found in the Epistle to Coroticus, in which he mentions that it was the custom for the Roman and Gallic Christians to send certain persons to the Franks and other nations for the purpose of redeeming baptized captives, which shows that he possessed such an acquaintance with

the state of affairs in Gaul as affords grounds for the belief that he had acquired that knowledge, probably, during a residence there at some period of his boyhood or youth.

We learn from another passage in his writings that he was certainly connected with Gaul in some way. In the Confession he writes:—"In mensura itaque fidei Trinitatis, oportet distinguere sine reprehensione periculi, notum facere donum Dei et consolationem æternam, sine timore fiducialiter Dei nomen ubique expandere, ut etiam post obitum meum Gallicis relinquerem fratribus, et filiis meis, quos ego in Domino baptizavi, tot millia hominum;"—"In the measure, therefore, of the faith of the Trinity, it behoves me to extol without holding back on account of danger, and to make known the gift of God and His eternal consolation, and confidently to magnify the name of God everywhere without fear, so that also after my death I may leave to my Gallic brethren, and to my sons whom I have baptized in the Lord, so many thousand men." The expression "Gallic brethren," has, no doubt, led to the belief that St. Patrick was a native of Gaul; and it is, of course, possible that he may have been born in it, or that he may, either through his father or his mother, have been in some way connected with it. The writer is, however, very decidedly of opinion that by the phrase "Gallic brethren," the saint meant his ecclesiastical brethren, and not his brethren in the flesh, and that the words were used in that sense alone, and that they cannot be rightly interpreted otherwise.

It may, thus, appear to be doubtful in which of the two countries he was made captive; but assuming, as we certainly may, that he was taken captive in either North Britain or Gaul, it is very improbable that this event took place in either of them in the *fifth* century. If St. Patrick came to Ireland in A.D. 432, as we have good reason for concluding that he was a young man when he entered on his missionary labours, he must have been captured about the year 420. Now it is in the very highest degree improbable that he was taken captive in either North Britain or Gaul at or about that date; we know that at that period of time the Romans had abandoned the whole island of Britain, and that North Britain, or Caledonia, as it was called, was then, and had been for many years, in the undisturbed possession of the natives of that country, and as we also learn from various sources, that there was then and always had been, a firm alliance between the Scots of Ireland and those of Caledonia, they being, in fact, the same people, and that

they had been in the habit of mutually assisting each other in attacking the Romans, and were both at this very time actively engaged, in conjunction with the Picts, in plundering the Britons. We have, therefore, no reason to believe in the story of a hostile invasion of North Britain by the Irish at that date; but, on the contrary, the very strongest reasons not only for disbelieving it, but for very decidedly pronouncing it to be false. Under the date A.D. 410, the Venerable Bede writes\*—*Fracta est autem Roma a Gothis anno millesimo sexagesimo-quarto suæ conditionis, ex quo tempore Romani in Britannia regnare cessarunt. . . . Exin Britannia in parte Brittonum, omni armato milite, militaribus copiis universis, tota floridæ juventutis alacritate spoliata quæ tyrannorum temeritate abducta nusquam ultra domum rediit, prædæ tantum patuit, utpote omnis bellici usus prorsus ignara; denique subito duabus gentibus transmarinis vehementer sævis, Scottorum a Circio, Pictorum ab Aquilone multos stupet gemitque per annos*”—“Rome was taken by the Goths in the year from its foundation, 1064, from which time the Romans ceased to rule in Britain. . . . From that time that part of Britain in the possession of the Britons (*i.e.*, those parts now called England and Wales) being utterly deprived of armed soldiers, of all military stores, and of all its active youth, who, led away by the inconsiderate rashness of the tyrants, never returned home, was wholly exposed to rapine, as being quite ignorant of all military practice; whereupon they were completely prostrated, and groaned for many years under two exceedingly fierce nations from across the sea,—the Scots from the West, and the Picts from the North.” And Gibbon, under the same date, writes†—“Whilst Italy was ravaged by the Goths, and a succession of feeble tyrants oppressed the provinces beyond the Alps, the British island separated itself from the body of the Roman Empire. The regular forces which guarded that remote province had been gradually withdrawn; and Britain was abandoned, without defence, to the Saxon pirates, and the savages of Ireland and Caledonia.” We thus learn upon unquestionable authority, that in A.D. 410, the Roman forces having been, previous to that year, “gradually withdrawn,” a process which had probably commenced about the year 400, when Italy was invaded by Alaric and the Goths, as the whole island of

\* Ven. Bede's Ecclesiastical History of England, B. I., C. XI and XII.

† Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol. V. Ch. XXXI.

Britain lay at the mercy of the Scots and Picts, Caledonia or North Britain must have been in their undisturbed possession not only at that date, but also for some years previously. We know too that affairs continued in this state until the year 448, when the Britons, in order to relieve themselves from the intolerable burthen, brought in the Saxons and their allies for their help and protection. The story, then, of a hostile invasion by the Scots of Ireland of the country of their friends and allies in Caledonia, some years subsequently to A.D. 410, is not only unsupported by any evidence whatever, but is directly opposed to all historical accounts of the state of affairs in Britain at that period.

We find, as I have before stated, on almost every matter of fact in the history of the Saint, the most contradictory statements, but in this case we cannot be surprised, neither is it wonderful to find that some writers, abandoning the story of his capture in North Britain at that date as groundless and untenable, relate that he was made captive somewhere on the coast of Gaul. The story, however, of his capture in Gaul at that period is almost equally incredible: it is extremely improbable that if his family had been settled in Gaul about the year 420, or, indeed, at any time in the early part of the fifth century, that they should move over into Britain and be found there, as we learn from the Confession, some ten years afterwards, at a time when the Romans had entirely abandoned the island, and when owing to the very disturbed and distressed state of the country, consequent upon the desolating incursions of the Picts and Scots, it is almost impossible to believe that a Roman family would select that time to go and settle in it.

That St. Patrick crossed the narrow seas between Scotland and Ireland, either on his being brought to Ireland as a captive, or on the occasion of some other memorable visit, viz., his first arrival as a Christian Missionary, there is evidence in the fact, that on the Irish coast, directly opposite to *Portpatrick* in Scotland, there is a place called *Templepatrick*, near to Donaghadee, in the County Down. There are, at present, no vestiges of the church which must have, at one time, existed there; but the spot is marked by an ancient burial-place, still used as such, within a very few yards of the sea, and by a well called St. Patrick's Well. The tradition in the neighbourhood is, that it is the place where the Saint landed, on his first coming to Ireland; and the erection of a church on a spot as

close to the sea-shore as a building could be put, apparently for the purpose of commemorating a landing, gives additional weight to the tradition.

Now, supposing Patrick to have been brought captive to Ireland in the year 240, and at that time to have been sixteen years of age,—see the Confession wherein he says, “*Annorum eram tunc fere xvi.*”—“I was then nearly sixteen years of age”—the year of his birth would be 224. He remained in bondage for the six years following his capture,—see the Confession, where he says—“*Et deinde postmodum conversus sum in fugam, et intermisi hominem cum quo fueram sex annis;*”—“And after a while, I took to flight, and left the man with whom I had been for six years;”—during which time he learned the Irish language, the first requisite of, and without doubt, the main cause of his success as a missionary, and nearly forgot, or at least lost, the perfect use of his own,—see the Confession again where he says, “*Quapropter olim cogitavi scribere, sed et usque nunc hæsitavi. Timui enim ne inciderem in linguam hominum. Quia non didici sicut et ceteri qui optime itaque jure et sacras literas utroque pari modo combiberunt, et sermones illorum ex infantia nunquam mutarunt, sed magis ad perfectum semper addiderunt. Nam sermo et loquela nostra translata est in linguam alienam sicut facile potest pobari ex saliva scripturæ meæ.*”—“Wherefore, I formerly thought to write, but hesitated even until now. For I feared lest I should fall under the censure of men, because I did not learn as others, who, being taught in the best manner, therefore rightly, in every way both drank in sacred learning in a proper manner, and never changed their language from childhood, but rather constantly added to its perfection. For my language and speech is translated into a foreign tongue, as may be easily observed from the homely style of my writing.”

This forms a perfectly consistent story, which places beyond a doubt the authenticity both of the Confession, and also of the Epistle to Coroticus. Take a boy sixteen years of age, a member of a family of patrician rank, and in very comfortable circumstances (see the Epistle to Coroticus, wherein he states that his captors “*devastaverunt servos et ancillas domus patris mei*”—“slaughtered the men-servants and maid-servants of my father’s house”)—unaccustomed to labour of any kind, and place him in bondage as a slave, amongst a people speaking a different language, and employ him in the menial occupation of tending cattle for the

next six years of his life, and what will be the result? He will become, so far as literary attainments are concerned, exactly what St. Patrick so simply and truthfully represented himself to be, and and what is, perhaps, more to our present purpose, what the style of his writings prove him to have been.

After his escape from slavery in Ireland, the next place in which we find young Patrick is somewhere in Britain, as he writes in the Confession:—"Et iterum post paucos annos in Britanniiis eram cum parentibus meis;"—"And again after a few years I was in Britain with my parents." It is necessary again to pause at this statement, as it is asserted by the advocates of his Gallic birth that by "Britanniis" he meant Brittany in Gaul, and not the country now called England. Any doubt on this point seems to be capable of being very easily removed. Gibbon, an unquestionable authority as an historian, states\* that the part of Armoric Gaul afterwards called Britany received that name from a colony of Britons who fled thither from their Saxon oppressors in England, and acquired a settlement there some time during the first half, or about the middle of the sixth century. St. Patrick then, even supposing that he lived in the fifth century, and that he is in this passage speaking of a residence in "Britanniis" shortly before, or about, the year 430, and consequently about twenty years before the Saxon invasion of England, could not have meant Britany in Gaul, as it is certain that that country was not then known by that name, and did not acquire it until at least one hundred years afterwards. It is certain, then, that at this period of his life he was living in Britain, and almost equally certain that immediately before, or, more probably, immediately after, this time, he spent some years in Gaul. We learn from the Epistle to Coroticus that he read the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testament in the Greek, and we have the strongest possible reasons for believing that he went to Gaul for the purpose either of learning that language, or of perfecting himself in the knowledge of it, and of the Holy Scriptures, before going to Ireland. The Christian religion was first introduced into Gaul by some members of the Greek church, and was carried thence into Britain: the Gallic was, therefore, regarded by the Britons as the parent church at this time. In proof of this statement it is only necessary to mention that three British bishops attended the Council of Arles in Gaul

\* Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol. VI., Ch. XXXVIII.

in A.D. 314.† We can have no hesitation in believing that the Greek missionaries had established schools in which a knowledge both of the Holy Scriptures and of the Greek language was imparted. The establishment of schools is the first and most essential step in all missionary undertakings. As the New Testament scriptures were originally written in Greek, we can easily believe that Greek missionaries preferred to teach them in that language, more particularly to youths designed for the ministry. Greek missionaries brought with them, as a matter of course, copies of the Scriptures in their own language, and taught them in that language alone, and the fact that St. Patrick learned them in that language marks beyond the possibility of a doubt or controversy on the subject the school in which he received his Christian education, and the Church in which he was ordained. We have a greater amount of evidence to prove the certainty of these facts, than we have almost on any other fact in the life of the Saint. In the Epistle, after quoting largely from the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments, in admonition and reproof of Coroticus, he writes—"Non mea verba, sed Dei, et Apostolorum, atque Prophetarum (quod ego Latinum exposui) qui nunquam enim mentiti sunt."—"These are not my words, but the words of God, and of the Apostles and Prophets (which I have set forth in Latin) who never lied." As this is a very important passage I give it also as it stands in the copy of the Epistle adopted by the Bollandists as the most correct version :—"Non mea verba sunt ista, sed Dei, et Apostolorum, atque Prophetarum qui nunquam mentiti sunt ; quæ ego in Latinum transtuli." "These are not my words, but the words of God, and of the Apostles, and Prophets who never lied ; which I have translated into Latin." Although I consider this passage to be of the very highest importance to the subject of the present inquiry, I will neither weary the patience nor insult the common sense of my readers by dwelling upon it. I need only say that here we have it under St. Patrick's own hand that he read the Bible in the Greek, the only language from which it was possible, in those days, to have translated it, and that he was not even furnished with a Latin version of it.

On an inquiry like the present, when it is necessary to examine and sift every particle of evidence, how minute soever it may be, I may not omit to mention as a proof, though it may appear

† History of the Christian Church, by J. C. Robertson, M.A.



to be a very trifling one, of the Saint's knowledge and use of the Greek language, which is, that in the Epistle to Coroticus, in making use of the Latin word "*Diabolus*," he writes it, using a particular Greek dialect, "*Zabolus*."

As St. Patrick whilst writing to Coroticus and his Roman soldiery in the Latin, the only language understood by them, tells them so explicitly that he had translated into that language the several texts of Holy Scripture which he wrote for their admonition, it may appear to be unnecessary to bring any other evidence in support of so plain a statement. The writer is, however, tempted by the very peculiarity of the proof in this case, to press upon the reader the absolute certainty that the saint read and studied the Scriptures in the Greek language alone, inasmuch as that fact is corroborated in a very extraordinary way, and in a manner that cannot be gainsayed, and that is, by his ignorance of the Latin language. The Saint studied the Scriptures in the Greek, and preached in Irish, until he had well-nigh forgotten the language of his youth. If he read the Scriptures in the Latin language and studied them so closely as it is evident that he did, how is it possible that he could have become such an indifferent Latin scholar?

There is another passage in his writings which affords additional evidence of the fact that he spent some time in preparatory study, and was ordained in Gaul. In the Confession he states:—"Unde autem (possem) etsi voluero dimittere illas, et pergere in Britannias, etsi libentissime paratus irem, quasi ad patriam et parentes: et non id solum, sed etiam usque ad Gallias visitarem fratres meos, ut viderem faciem sanctorum Domini mei: scit Dominus quod ego id valde optabam."—"Wherefore, though I shall have wished to leave them if I could, and to go into Britain, as I should with the greatest pleasure make this journey, as going to my country and kindred; and not thither only, but also that I might go even as far as Gaul to visit my brethren, and to see the faces of my Lord's saints. The Lord knows that I very greatly desired this." There can be no dispute about the meaning of this language. St. Patrick here distinguishes Britain as his country and that of his kindred, and speaks of Gaul as the country of his brethren and of the Lord's saints. It is quite evident that in thus distinguishing Britain as the country of his kindred, and Gaul as that of his brethren and the Lord's saints, he could only have meant his ecclesiastical brethren. His language shows the affection-

ate regard which he entertained for his fellow-students, amongst whom he had been ordained—a regard which an absence from them for, perhaps, half a century does not appear to have weakened.

The fact that young Patrick received some preparatory education, and was ordained in Gaul, receives confirmation from a source in which we might least expect to find it, viz.—“The Book of Armagh.” In the life of the Saint given therein it is written,—“*Patricius et qui cum eo erant declinaverunt iter ad quendam mirabilem hominem summum episcopum Amatho rege nomine in propinquo loco habitantem ibique Sanctus Patricius sciens quæ eventura erant ibi episcopalem gradum ab Matho rege sancto episcopo accepit etiam Auxilius Iserminusque et ceteri inferiores gradus eodem die quo Sanctus Patricius ordinatus est. Tum acceptis benedictionibus profectis omnibus secundum morem cantato etiam Patricio quasi specialiter et convenienter hoc psalmistæ versum. Tu es sacerdos in æternum secundum ordinem Melchisedec. Venerabilis viator paratam navem in nomine sanctæ Trinitatis ascendit et pervenit Britannias. Et omissis omnibus ambulandi anfractibus præter commune via officium nemo enim dissidiæ querit Dominum cum omni velocitate flatu que prospero mare nostrum contendit.*”—“Patrick and those who were with him bent their steps towards a certain illustrious man and chief bishop, by name King Amathus, dwelling in a neighbouring place, and there Saint Patrick, knowing what events were about to occur, received the episcopal degree from Mathus, holy king and bishop. Auxilius and Iserminus likewise, and others received inferior degrees on the same day on which Saint Patrick was ordained. Then, having received the blessings, and everything being performed according to custom, and Patrick having sang, as was most appropriate and suitable, this verse of the psalmist,—‘Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec’—the venerable traveller embarked in a vessel prepared for him in the name of the Holy Trinity, and reached Britain; and avoiding every circuitous route he took the most direct road, for no one seeks the Lord through disinclination, and with all speed and a prosperous wind he hastened to our shores.” And in another part of the Book of Armagh, entitled “*Annotationes Aidi*,”—“The Annotations of Aidus,”—Bishop of Sleibhte, as he is elsewhere styled in the same book, it is written :—

“*De ætate ejus quando iens videre sedem apostolicam voluit*

discere sapientiam. De inventione sancti generis in Galliis et ideo non exivit ultra. De ætate ejus quando visitavit eum angelus ut veniret adhuc. De reversione ejus de Gallis et ordinatione Palladii et mox morte ejus. De ordinatione ejus ab Amatho rege episcopo defuncto Palladio."—"Concerning his age when going to visit the apostolic see where he wished to learn wisdom. Concerning his finding a holy set of men in Gaul, and that therefore he went no farther. Of his age when an angel visited him and directed him to come hither (*i.e.*, to Ireland). Concerning his return from the Gauls, and the ordination and death of Palladius shortly after. Of his ordination by Amathus, king and bishop, after the death of Palladius."

Extracting the truth from the falsehood contained in these passages, we learn that young Patrick leaving Britain travelled to Gaul for his education ("to learn wisdom"); where he obtained it; and was also ordained; and returning through Britain travelled thence to Ireland to commence his labours as an evangelist. We may remark in passing, that here we have, in the Book of Armagh, the most positive and decided contradiction of the story told by some of the writers of the Lives of the Saint, and by the Chroniclers who follow them, of his journey to Rome, and of his ordination by Pope Celestine, and this, too, on the authority of Aodh, Bishop of Sleibhte, who appears to have given in his adhesion to, and was when he wrote this, a bishop in communion with the Church of Rome.

Let us now accompany St. Patrick on his return to Ireland to preach the Gospel, which we may conclude that he did before the thirtieth year of his age. To this conclusion we must come for several reasons. In the Confession, after giving an account of his escape from captivity, at which time we know that he was about twenty-two years of age, he writes, "Et iterum post paucos annos in Britannis eram cum parentibus meis, qui me ut filium susceperunt, et ex fide rogaverunt me ut vel modo ego (post tantas tribulationes quas ego pertuli) nusquam ab illis discederem."—"And again after a few years I was in Britain with my parents, who received me as a son, and earnestly entreated me that I would never again depart from them after the many calamities I had undergone." We must infer from this language that he was then still a very young man; and the style in which he represents himself to have been addressed in his dream,—the relation of which immediately follows,

—by those near the wood Focluti, must remove any doubt on the subject. They cried, “*Rogamus te, sancte puer, ut venias et adhuc ambulas inter nos.*”—“We entreat thee, holy youth (literally, boy), to come and walk amongst us.” In another place he writes:—“*Unde mihi postmodum tam magnum et salubre donum Dei agnoscere et diligere, ut patriam et parentes amitterem, et munera multa (quæ) mihi offerebantur cum fletu et lachrymis? Et offendi illic contra votum aliquantos de senioribus meis. Sed gubernante Deo, nullo modo consensi neque acquievi illis: non ego, sed Dei gratia, quæ vicit in me, et restiti illis omnibus, quatenus venirem ad Iernas gentes Evangelium prædicare, et ab incredulis injurias perferre, ut audirem opprobrium peregrinationis meæ et persecutiones multas usque ad vincula, et ut darem me et ingenuitatem meam pro utilitate aliorum.*”—“Whence, moreover, has it been my lot to comprehend and so highly esteem this so great and salutary gift of God, that I should abandon my country and parents, and refuse the many gifts which were offered to me with weeping and tears? And I gave great offence by this, and acted against the wishes of not a few of my seniors, but God overruling me, I in no way consented nor complied with them: yet not I, but the grace of God which conquered in me, and I held out against them all, so that I might come to the Irish people to preach the Gospel, and bore the insults of the unbelieving, and the many persecutions even to bonds, and listened to reproachful language about my purposed wandering to a foreign country, and that I should give up myself and my nobility for the benefit of others.” There can be no mistake about the meaning of this passage. St. Patrick here describes in the very plainest language the struggle which took place between himself and his parents and kindred, when he openly embraced Christianity, and announced his intention of returning to Ireland to spread that religion amongst the people with whom he had lately been a slave.

If there could be any doubts about the meaning of a former passage in the Saint's writings, on which I have already commented, they must be entirely removed on a due consideration of this passage. Speaking of his noble birth, he uses the same Latin term, except that in the former he uses the adjective, and in the latter the substantive noun: in the former he says—“*Ingenuus fui secundum carnem*”—“I was of good birth according to the flesh;” and in the latter, “*ut darem me et ingenuitatem meam pro utilitate*

aliorum"—"That I should give up myself and my good birth for the benefit of others." It may be necessary to mention, for the information of some of my readers, that there were but two grades in Roman society—the noble and the plebeian. When St. Patrick speaks of his good birth, he means what we understand by noble or aristocratic birth, or what he elsewhere himself calls it, "*nobilitatem meam*"—"my nobility." The treatment which he received from his family and kindred at this period of his life, on declaring himself to be a Christian, and announcing his intention of preaching that religion, renders it evident, beyond the possibility of a doubt on the subject, that they regarded him as a person committing a desperate act of folly, and utterly degrading and ruining himself. They certainly treated him as a person either insane or criminal, as is evident by their having recourse to the private confinement or the public imprisonment of him. It is quite clear that their conduct towards him resulted principally from his open adoption of Christianity, as it was that, and that alone, which wrought a forfeiture of his social and civil rights and privileges, and placed him in a position of degradation and danger. The mere fact of a Roman gentleman going to Ireland against the wishes of his family could have in no way affected his civil rights as a Roman citizen: it was his avowed intention of going to Ireland as a preacher of a religion then proscribed by law, and the consequent ruin of all his prospects under the Roman government, that so incensed his relations against him.

We have here a very vivid picture of young Patrick in the conflict which then took place betwixt him and his family and relations. In it we cannot fail to recognize the youth attacked by "*fletu et lachrymis*"—"the tears and entreaties" of his mother and other female relatives;—"munera multa"—"the many tempting offers" and expostulations of his father and male kindred:—and when these failed to induce him to desist from his purpose, we see him listening to "*injurias ab incredulis*"—"insulting sneers against his religion,"—and "*opprobrium*"—"reproaches and upbraidings" about the folly of "*ut darem me et ingenuitatem meam*"—"giving up all the various privileges and advantages of his rank and position in society,"—and destroying his prospects in life, and "*peregrinationis*"—"roving to another country" on such an errand:—and when these and other "*persecutiones*"—"persecutions"—were of no avail, we find him subjected "*usque ad vincula*"—"even to

actual personal restraint and confinement." Taken in connexion with this statement of the Saint, that his parents and kindred had, when all other means failed to induce him to yield, resorted as a last resource to the actual imprisonment of him, another passage in his writings already quoted in which he styles himself—"profuga,"—"a fugitive"—leaves us little room to doubt that when he described himself as "profuga," he used the word in its primary signification, and that he had actually made his escape from them by flight. And again he writes,—"*Vos scitis et Deus qualiter apud vos conversatus sum a juventute mea*;"—"You know and God knows what my conduct and conversation have been amongst you from my youth." It is quite unnecessary to dwell longer upon this point. The utter falsehood and absurdity of the statement that St. Patrick was sixty years of age when he came to Ireland, has been long ago exposed, even by many learned and intelligent Roman Catholic writers. The very learned and talented Dr. Lanigan adopts and advocates a much more plausible and rational version of the story, which is, that Patrick was born in the year 387;—was taken captive on the coast of Gaul by King Niall of the Nine Hostages about the year 403,—and was consequently forty-five years of age when he came to Ireland. The writer wishes to speak with the very highest respect for the great learning and ability of the Rev. Dr. Lanigan, and acknowledges the candour and impartiality with which he writes on the subject of the Lives of the Saint; but he submits that neither will the version of the story supported by the learned Doctor stand the trial of just criticism, when brought to the test of the Saint's own writings. It is but justice to Dr. Lanigan to state, that as it never occurred to him to doubt the truth of St. Patrick's coming to Ireland in the year 432, he adopted the only rational theory on the subject: seeing how groundless and incredible was the story of Patrick's capture in North Britain about that period of time, and knowing that King Niall had engaged in a piratical expedition into Gaul shortly before his death, which took place in the year 404 or 405, he had no other resource whatever, than to adopt that version of the story which attributed young Patrick's capture to that expedition, and was therefore compelled to reconcile the year of his birth, and his age on coming to Ireland, with his known age at the time of his capture. Let us now proceed to compare this version of the story with that of the writer, and test them both by the relation given by

St. Patrick himself. That Patrick, a youth of about twenty-five years of age, the son of a Roman magistrate, living in a Roman province in the third century, adopting a new and despised religion then proscribed by law, and proposing to set out for Ireland, to spread that religion amongst a people with whom he had lately been a captive, and for whom his very captivity amongst them had inspired the warm-hearted boy with a love,—that a young man, I say, in his position, should be met with the mingled tears, entreaties, and reproaches of his mother, female relatives, and male kindred, and that they should resort at length to sterner measures to compel him to a compliance with their wishes, is just what we might expect. We also find, as we might further expect, that when he did take that step, and as we have good reason to believe, made his escape, and fled from them, that they were so incensed against him, that they never, during his long life, either visited him in Ireland, or received a visit from him, though it is certain that they were resident so near to each other that a few days would have at any time sufficed for a visit from either party. Let us now reverse the picture. How is it possible to believe that the family of a Christian clergyman, residing somewhere in Britain, about the year 413, could have been so distressed or incensed against a son for adopting the profession of his father, or displeased at his proposal of moving into Ireland at a time, when, as regarded Britain, the state of that country would have rendered such a step a matter of prudence; and when, as regarded Ireland, they would have found there not only a refuge from distress, but also very many Christian people? In a word, how is the language of St. Patrick, in which is described the treatment he received from his family on his making known his intention of setting out to preach the Gospel in Ireland, at all applicable to the case of a person arrived at the mature age of forty-five years, and occupying the dignified position of a Christian bishop? If it be admitted that the scenes described by the Saint took place in his youth, but urged that he might still not have come to Ireland till in his forty-fifth year, where and how did he spend the intervening twenty years of his life? How explain his own observation addressed to the Irish people, that they knew “what his conduct and conversation had been amongst them from his youth?” It appears to the writer that it would require a most extraordinary amount of credulity to enable any person to believe the absurd and incon-

sistent story that the family of a person resident in Britain, and filling the office of a Christian "deacon," in the second quarter of the fifth century, could have acted in the manner as represented by St. Patrick, against a son who had arrived at the mature age of forty-five years, and who occupied the then very honourable and dignified position of a Christian bishop. We have yet more and equally good reasons for believing that he came to Ireland as a preacher whilst he was a very young man. It would be too tedious to cite all the passages in his writings in which he speaks of his own want of learning. We have before our eyes specimens of his want of skill in the use of his own language (the Latin). How then is it possible to believe the story that he spent many years in study, and that he was, not to say sixty, but even forty-five years of age when he commenced his missionary labours in Ireland.

Whilst we have this passage in the Confession before us, the writer wishes to take the opportunity to refer to the accounts handed down to us of the circumstances attending the mission of Palladius, and the alleged mission of Patrick, in the fifth century, for the purpose of contrasting them with the circumstances under which, according to his own statements, our apostle came to Ireland. All historical accounts agree in stating that Palladius came to Ireland attended by a number of clergymen. We learn from Dr. Keating's *History of Ireland*,\* that "Palladius, in this expedition, was attended by twelve clergymen." We are also told that "St. Patrick brought over with him twenty-four of the Roman clergy to assist him in *his* undertaking." Another writer magnifies this number into "thirty holy men of the episcopal order." These statements belong solely to the mission of Palladius, and so far as they relate to him, and to the position of the Christian church in his days, are, doubtless, to a certain extent, true. Though we may discard the story of the "thirty bishops," which is evidently a gross exaggeration, we yet can have no hesitation in believing that he came attended by a large retinué, including a number of clergymen. Here we have an account of the circumstances attendant on the advent of a missionary bishop of the Christian Church in the fifth century. We have every reason to conclude that he occupied a position, if not of wealth, certainly of rank and dignity; and that he was regarded as a person of very considerable importance. Let us now hear what St. Patrick says about *his* coming to Ireland. He

\* *History of Ireland*, by Jeffery Keating, D.D. Vol. ii., pp. 11 and 12.



tells us that, when he announced his intention of going to Ireland to preach the Christian religion, he was first met with all sorts of tears, entreaties, and expostulations, and offers of wealth and place, to induce him to desist from his purpose, and when these failed, his religion was reviled, he himself was abused and upbraided about the folly and madness of his conduct in thus degrading himself into the position of a criminal, and, after enduring all kinds of persecution, was finally placed in confinement; and, as he here uses the word "*vincula*"—"the bonds or fetters of a prisoner"—it is probable that he was publicly imprisoned on the criminal charge of being a Christian. And, finally, he tells us that he came to Ireland as "a fugitive!" It is utterly impossible to reconcile these two stories with each other, and with the same period of time in the history of the church. If we entertain, for a moment, the supposition that St. Patrick lived in the fifth century, the conduct of his family towards him, and his own repeated statements about the forfeiture of his nobility, are inexplicable; whilst, if we once admit the truth of the fact that he lived before the publication of the Edict of Galerius in A.D. 311, and those of Constantine in 313 and 324, the conduct of his family is just what we might expect it to be, and his statements about it and himself are easily understood.

The statement respecting the advanced age at which our Saint commenced his labours may apply to Palladius. It is very probable that he was sixty years of age when he came to Ireland. In reading the various Lives of St. Patrick, the reader should always bear in mind that they are the lives of two distinct persons—Patrick and Palladius—combined and mixed up together, and written as the life of a single person. This peculiarity makes it imperative on the reader that he should exercise some caution and discrimination before determining to which of them any particular statement relates, which may appear to be probable, and which may possibly be true as regards one of them. Entreating the patience of the reader for a moment, I may be permitted here to give a specimen of the way in which the Lives of St. Patrick appear to have been written. The generally-received story is, that he was born in A.D. 372;—was sixty years of age when he came to Ireland in A.D. 432;—that he spent sixty years in preaching to and converting the Irish, and died in A.D. 492, aged one hundred and twenty years. Now, although this story, taken as a whole,

is quite false, it is yet composed of several statements which, taken separately, may be, and probably are, in the main, true, mixed up with a certain amount of misrepresentation. It is very probably true, that Palladius was born about the year 372, and also true that he was sixty years of age when he was ordained a bishop and sent to Ireland; it is certainly true that he came thither in the year 431; and it is also very probably true that St. Patrick, having come to Ireland before he was thirty years of age, actually spent sixty years of his life in Ireland. It is most probable that the story of St. Patrick being sixty years of age when he came to Ireland originated in this way; but if it did not, such a relation only serves to prove that the story was an afterthought, and that it was concocted and written at a time when it had become the custom for candidates for the ministry to spend many previous years in preparatory studies. At present, eight to ten years suffice for that purpose; and even granting that St. Patrick did devote a like number of years to study, he must have come to Ireland about his thirtieth year. Young Patrick was, we must suppose, at that time anxiously revolving in his mind the possibility of attempting to convert the Irish people, and, as we may certainly infer from the entreaty of his relatives not to leave them, was openly discussing with them the propriety of such an undertaking; and his dream was but the consequence of his waking thoughts; and we may, therefore, conclude that he set out either for Gaul or for Ireland very soon afterwards. It is probable, from all we can gather of the Saint's disposition and character from his own writings, that he had spent the "*paucos annos*"—"few years"—after his escape from bondage, in the study of the Holy Scriptures, and that he had been ordained before the time of which we are now speaking, when he was "*in Britannis cum parentibus*"—"in Britain with his parents." Upon the whole, we are justified in coming to the conclusion, taking into account his great zeal and ardent nature, that the Saint commenced his labours in spreading the Gospel in Ireland very shortly after the twenty-fifth year of his age. If, then, this event took place about the thirtieth year of his age, this computation would bring us to the year 254, and would thus allow ample time for the conversion from paganism of King Cormac Ulfada, whose life and reign continued, according to some records, till the year 277,—for converted he certainly was by somebody. See "*Annals of Ireland by the Four Mas-*

ters:—"The age of Christ 266. Forty years was Cormac, the son of Art, son of Conn, in the sovereignty of Ireland, when he died at Cleiteach, the bone of a salmon sticking in his throat, on account of the *siabhradh* (genii) which Maelgenn the Druid incited at him, after Cormac had turned against the Druids, on account of his adoration of God in preference to them. Wherefore a devil attacked him at the instigation of the Druids, and gave him a painful death." Here we have a sure and certain record, on an authority which, we presume, no person will question, of the introduction of the worship of God, and, as we may safely infer, of the Christian religion, into Ireland in the middle of the third century, to the consideration of which the writer will return hereafter.

Let us now pass on towards the close of St. Patrick's life and labours, and to the time when he wrote the "Epistle to Coroticus," whom the writer maintains to have been Carausius, the Roman Admiral and General, who usurped the sovereignty of Britain, in the year 287. He had, some time previously, been appointed to the command of the Roman fleet, stationed in the seas now called the British Channel, and intrusted with the command thereof expressly for the purpose of repelling the desultory incursions of the Franks, a warlike and piratical tribe who had settled some years previously, on the Frisian shores, near to the mouth of the Rhine, and who had been, and were then, "incessantly ravaging the provinces adjacent to the ocean." Carausius made use of the power and authority, with which he was invested by the Roman Emperor, to usurp the sovereignty of Britain, and in fact reigned over that province for about seven, or, as some say, ten years, during which time he not only courted the friendship of the Franks, but, like them, by means of his powerful fleet, "ravaged the coasts of the ocean."—(See "Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," vol. ii., pages 123 and seq.)

Now, supposing St. Patrick to have been born about the year 224, he would have been seventy years of age in 294, the year in which, according to some writers, Carausius was killed: this, with reference to the period in the life of the Saint, in which the Epistle to Coroticus was written, would quite coincide with the opinion formed of necessity by every intelligent person who has read the letter, that it must have been written, when the Saint was far advanced in life, and towards the close of his labours.

Having laid before my readers most of the evidence available

for the purpose of enabling us to form an opinion upon the history of the early life of St. Patrick previous to his coming to Ireland, we may now proceed to the consideration of that relating to the subsequent portion of his life spent in Ireland, having especial reference to the period in our era in which he lived and laboured in this island.

For the benefit of those who may not be intimately acquainted with the commonly-received story of St. Patrick, it is here briefly stated. We are told by most of the writers of the *Lives of the Saint*, and by the *Annalists* and historians who blindly follow them, that Patrick, being sixty years of age, was ordained a bishop by Pope Celestine, and sent to Ireland in the year 432 to evangelize the Irish then a heathen people; a work which, having the power of working miracles, he fully accomplished during a residence there of sixty years. We are also gravely informed by some of the same parties that the Saint had so far succeeded in converting the whole nation in the short space of six years, that in A.D. 438 a Board, composed of nine of the principal persons in the kingdom, viz., three kings, three saints, and three of the men most learned in the laws, was appointed to revise the laws of Ireland, so as to make them conformable to the Christian religion. This story, however true it may be in some respects as regards Palladius, is wholly untrue so far as it relates to St. Patrick; and is, moreover, quite inconsistent with the authentic and unquestionable historical records of the existence of Christianity in Ireland long before the middle of the fifth century, which are inexplicable upon the supposition that St. Patrick came to Ireland as the first efficient Christian missionary in A.D. 432.

In the first place, there cannot be the slightest doubt that he did not hold a commission from the Bishop of Rome. We have abundant evidence to prove the fact that after a preparatory study of the Holy Scriptures in Gaul, under the instruction of some Greek missionaries, he was ordained by a member of the church planted by them in that country. We find besides, as we might expect, that he makes no allusion to such a commission, neither in the *Confession* nor in the *Epistle*. It is altogether incredible that a person so unassuming would not, by the slightest allusion to it, in the *Confession*, wherein he descends to some very minute particulars of his life and parentage, &c., and states for what a length of time he had hesitated to address them, feeling his own

inability as a writer, refer to such a fact in support, and as a complete justification of his pretensions, and as forming an ample apology for any shortcomings on his part. And it is very difficult to believe that he would not, in his Epistle to Coroticus, or rather Carausius, and his Roman soldiery, more especially in a matter about which he was so anxious, and in which he required to exercise all the authority in his power, in order to obtain a compliance with his requests, mention to them his commission from the Bishop of Rome, and make use of his name in support of his demands. But that which sets the question of his connection with the Church of Rome at rest, and removes all doubt on the subject, is the fact, that the Church in Ireland did not celebrate Easter on the same day as did the Church of Rome. This is proved by the testimony of the venerable Bede,\* to whose Ecclesiastical History the reader is referred for an account of the paschal controversy, which proves beyond a doubt, that the Irish Christians during the sixth and seventh centuries followed the practice of the Asiatic and Greek Churches, in the celebration of Easter, and not that of the Latin Church. It is admitted by the writer that the certainty of this fact is disputed by some parties, who argue, that the celebration of Easter on a different day from that appointed by the Church of Rome, resulted from the Irish clergy being "unacquainted with the improved cycle of nineteen years observed at Rome in the time of Pope Hilary, A.D. 463; but continued to use the ancient, but incorrect, cycle of eighty-four years." To this assertion the writer replies, that the account given by Bede, supported by the ancient documents, first published by Archbishop Ussher, giving an account of "The three orders of Saints in Ireland," during the fifth and sixth centuries, clearly proves, that the Irish Christians did celebrate Easter on the same day in the year as did the Greek Church, viz., on the fourteenth moon after the vernal equinox. Even granting all that these writers contend for, it cannot be supposed, if St. Patrick had been ordained and sent to Ireland by the Bishop of Rome in A.D. 432, that he would, within the short space of thirty years, have ceased to keep up any intercourse whatever with the head of his Church, and that he should have been left in ignorance on a subject which was, at all times, deemed to be of so much importance in the Christian Churches: if we concede, for the sake of argument, all they ask for, and further, that St. Patrick was commissioned by

\* Venerable Bede's Ecclesiastical History of England, Lib. III., Ch. XXV.

the Bishop of Rome, it would tend to prove all that the writer contends for, viz., that St. Patrick came to Ireland long before the year 432, and that the lapse of a century or two had entirely dissolved any connexion between the Church in Ireland and that of Rome, supposing that such connexion had once existed.

It is admitted by all parties, that St. Patrick founded or established the Church in Ireland; the Church in Ireland differed in the celebration of Easter and in other observances, from the Church of Rome; therefore, our apostle had no connexion whatever with that Church.

That St. Patrick had no commission from Rome, goes a great way—I might say the whole way—to prove that he came to Ireland at a period antecedent to the time when the Bishops of Rome began to arrogate to themselves a supreme authority over Christendom, and, consequently, long before the middle of the fifth century. If St. Patrick had no commission from Rome, and if Palladius and his successors had, as is almost certain,—as the popes having once taken up the case of Ireland would not be likely to give it up (especially such a man as Pope Leo I., the second successor of Pope Celestine),—it is evident that he, Patrick, could not have been cotemporary with them, and, therefore, must have existed before them.

If St. Patrick had no commission from Rome, and if the immediate successor of Palladius had,—as nearly all the writers of his life, and some of the annalists, agree in asserting that he had,—St. Patrick and the immediate successor of Palladius could not have been one and the same person.

In the next place, besides that the fact is admitted by all parties, there are the very strongest reasons for believing that he was the first Christian Missionary to Ireland, and that he came as such to a heathen people: because, in the first place, the tradition over all Ireland is, that he was, and all the numerous writers of the “Lives” of the Saint, and all the records of him, agree in their statement of this fact; and, secondly, he himself makes not the slightest allusion to any person as having preceded him: that a person so unassuming, and so timid about arrogating too much to himself, and so anxious about a strict adherence to truth (see the Confession), should have entered into other men’s labours, and entirely ignored any Christianity previously existing in Ireland, as he does both in the Confession and Epistle, is incredible; and that he should have succeeded

Palladius, and more especially, if he held a similar commission from the Bishop of Rome, and also completely ignored him, is still more incredible.

We find, as we might expect, in the writings of St. Patrick, frequent allusions to his missionary labours in the conversion of the Irish people, but in none of them does he even hint at the existence of any Christianity in Ireland previous to his coming; but he goes much further than merely ignoring the existence of any Christianity in Ireland before his time. In the Confession he writes—"Unde autem Hiberione, qui nunquam notitiam Dei habuerant, nec nisi idola immunda usque nunc semper coluerunt, quomodo nuper effecta est plebs Domini, et filii Dei nuncupabuntur;"—"Whence, I say then, is it, that in Ireland where they had never had a knowledge of God, nor have ever before even until now worshipped aught but filthy idols, how is it that it has lately come to pass that they shall be called the people of the Lord, and sons of God?" How a person with preconceived notions on the subject of the history of St. Patrick may read this passage, it is not easy to say, but it appears to the writer that it would not be very difficult to determine the meaning which an unprejudiced person, taking up the writings of St. Patrick with a mind not preoccupied by a previously-formed opinion, would attach to it. If, then, St. Patrick, on his arrival, found the Irish a heathen people, he *must* have come amongst them some time in the third century, as there is complete evidence to prove that Christianity prevailed to a certain extent in Ireland during that and the succeeding century.

All the writers of the "Lives" of the Saint stand in this dilemma: if the Saint came to Ireland in the year 432, they are clearly convicted of falsehood when they state that he came to a purely heathen people, as it can be proved beyond a doubt that Christianity prevailed more or less in Ireland before that year; if the Saint came to a purely heathen people, it is, for the same reason, equally clear that they stand convicted of falsehood, when they state that he came to Ireland in the year 432.

St. Patrick, say all the writers of his "Lives," came to Ireland in A.D. 432!

St. Patrick, say they all, came to Ireland to a purely heathen people!

But it can be proved that in A.D. 432 the Irish were not a

purely heathen people, as Christianity certainly prevailed more or less in Ireland at that date, and for a very considerable time prior to it; therefore St. Patrick did not come to Ireland in A.D. 432.

Again, as to the period of time in which St. Patrick lived, if he came to Ireland in the year 432, and died in the year 493,—these being the dates of his mission and death adopted by the common consent of the learned,—and granting him nearly the very longest term of life usually enjoyed by man, he must have been born about the year 400, and taken captive by some Irish expedition about the year 416. I am not aware that there is any record whatever of such a descent upon that part of Britain now called Scotland about that time; and even if there were, it would be in the highest degree improbable that they would have found a Roman family there. If we may credit our most reliable historians, there was not at that date a single Roman legion in all Britain. Most writers assert that the Roman soldiery had been entirely withdrawn for the defence of the other provinces lying nearer to Rome, many years before that date. According to Bede, that event took place in the year 409; and according to some writers, the last Roman legion departed from Britain several years prior to that date; and in the process of withdrawing, we must suppose that North Britain, if not the first, was certainly not the latest to be abandoned. The Romans appear from all accounts to have had, at the best, a very uncertain tenure of any portion of North Britain, the only part of it ever really conquered by them, lying betwen the wall of Severus and that of Agricola, having been repeatedly wrested from them by the Picts and Scots; and being at all times exposed to the hostile incursions of those warlike and restless neighbours, it is very difficult to give credit to a story so extraordinary as that a Roman magistrate should, at a time when Britain was quite deserted by the Roman soldiery, be settled as a colonist at the very furthest extremity of the province, and in the immediate neighbourhood of a people who had never professed friendship, but had constantly evinced their hostility and hatred to the Roman name and nation. And even on the supposition that he was so bold, we have no warrant for believing in any hostile attack by the Irish on any part of Scotland at that time, as we are certainly informed that King Niall of the Nine Hostages had, some time previous to his death, which took place in the year 405, attacked the Roman forces in Britain. The fact of his attacking the Romans would rather tend to show



that there was an alliance between the Scots of Ireland and those of North Britain, a fact which we learn from other sources, as we know that they were intimately connected, and that they, about the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century, united in attacking the then retreating Romans, and in plundering their province. It may be necessary to mention here, for the information of the reader, that the inhabitants of Ireland at that time were called Scots, and that the Scots of North Britain were a successful colony from Hibernia, or Scotia, as it was sometimes called, who had established themselves in North Britain by dispossessing the Picts, whom they drove over to the eastern parts of that country.

Let us now proceed to the consideration of the Epistle to Coroticus; and were it not for the deference due to so many learned men, who seem to have adopted the generally-received version of the story, I would say that the idea of his having been a Welsh chief is absurd. Before the complete subjugation of Britain by the Romans, the conquered Britons fled from them into the mountainous country now called Wales, and that portion of the island was the last subdued by them. It is highly improbable, therefore, that there existed at any time very much intercourse between the Romans and the people of that part of Britain; and it is not likely that the former would give themselves much trouble about such a wild, mountainous region, so long as the inhabitants remained quiet; and if the Welsh, so to call them, of those days, were as noted for dislike of any intercourse with strangers, as their descendants have been in times past, it is very improbable that they courted any acquaintance or intimacy with their Roman masters. To suppose, therefore, a Welsh chief, having Roman soldiers in his pay, more than half a century after the Romans had entirely abandoned Britain, seems to be in the very highest degree improbable; and that St. Patrick should have addressed such men, who, supposing them to have been in the pay of a Welsh chieftain, must have been either deserters from their own standards, or at best a foreign band of mercenary troops, and alluded to them as Roman citizens, and that, too, a full half century after the Emperor Honorius had absolutely cast off Britain, and formally absolved it from its allegiance as a Roman province, is really absurd. And here it must be observed that St. Patrick, in the Epistle, does not distinguish them as *the Roman* soldiers of Coroticus, which he certainly would have done, if they had been, as is generally supposed, an isolated body

of Roman soldiers in the pay of a British chief. He addresses them as the soldiers of Coroticus, and his fellow-citizens, or Roman citizens, though undeserving of the name,—epithets, under the supposed circumstances, altogether inapplicable.

During the half century immediately preceding the time now under consideration, Britain is described by every historian as having been in a wretched condition. Utterly deserted by the Romans, the Britons were perfectly helpless, and quite unable to resist the Picts and Scots, who ravaged the whole country at their pleasure.

Some historians tell us, that the Britons were so grossly ignorant of the art of war, that in defending the wall of Severus, they were unacquainted with the simple military rule of posting a portion of their forces as sentinels, and of relieving that portion, and so taking the duty in turn; and that they occupied the wall and fortifications with their whole forces, so that they were wholly worn out with watching, and want of rest, and, consequently, when attacked by their enemies, were easily defeated. This could not have been the case, had one single Roman soldier been left among them. They had solicited aid from their former masters in vain, and in their distress had applied to the Saxons, who had indeed come to their assistance, and had driven off the Picts and Scots, but who, at the time we are now treating of, had become equally, if not more troublesome neighbours. This being the posture of affairs, it is hard to believe that any British chieftain was so powerful, as to be able to keep Roman soldiers in his pay, and amuse himself by ravaging the coasts of Ireland, and carrying the captives thence taken, for sale amongst the Picts and Scots of North Britain. The belief that Coroticus was a Welsh chieftain, is so ill-founded, and rests on such extreme improbabilities, taking into account the time at which he is supposed to have lived, that it ought to be absolutely rejected, unless it can be clearly proved that the Britons of the country now called Wales, were, at that time, in the habit of making predatory incursions into Ireland, which, I hold, it is impossible to do: the Britons, though a warlike, bold, and courageous people when subdued by the Romans, were, during their rule, for four centuries, neither encouraged nor permitted to cultivate their warlike propensities. It may be here urged, that relief for more than half-a century from the Roman yoke, had generated a spirit of enterprise amongst the Britons; that so long a period of time

had elapsed is rendered doubtful, if we give credit to some writers, who record the birth of St. Patrick as having taken place in the year 387; adopting that date for the sake of argument, the probability would be, that the Epistle to Coroticus was written about the year 450. However this may be, the ignorance of the Britons in the arts of warfare, and their timidity, and want of enterprise, during the whole course of the fifth century, is abundantly proved by their absolute helplessness and total inability to resist their Pictish and Scottish enemies during the former half, or their Saxon invaders during the latter half, of that period. Such being the acknowledged state of affairs in Britain, it becomes absolutely necessary for the advocates of the theory that Coroticus was a British chief—kept Roman soldiers in his pay—lived about the middle or latter half of the fifth century—and made repeated incursions into Ireland, to produce some evidence in support of the belief in such a very extraordinary story. This they are quite unable to do. The only particle of evidence produced by the learned Dr. Todd on the subject,\* is a quotation from a Welsh writer, that “Caredig,” (supposed to be Coroticus), “is said to have expelled the Gwyddyl, or Irish, from South Wales, and afterwards to have taken possession of the country.” This is a most unfortunate quotation for an advocate of the Welsh chief theory, as it is directly opposed to his argument; it is the strongest possible evidence to prove, not that the Welsh attacked the Irish coasts, but that the Irish made successful hostile incursions into Wales; that, in fact, the Britons were then equally at the mercy of the Picts and Scots on the north—the Saxons on the south and east—and the Irish on the west coast (a fact which we also learn from Bede and other writers). Gibbon, quoting Carte and Whitaker as his authorities,† says,—“It is supposed that the Scots of Ireland invaded by sea, the whole Western coast of Britain.” If it be a proof of anything, it proves beyond a doubt, that the Irish invaders had actually made a settlement, and established a colony in South Wales;‡ and that the Welsh chief, Caredig, succeeded at length in “expelling” them, and “afterwards took possession of the country,” which had been for some time previously occupied by them. Before we take leave of the Welsh chief, Caredig, who is

\* St. Patrick, Apostle of Ireland, by James H. Todd, D.D., Page 352, Note.

† Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol. V., Ch. XXX.; Carte's History of England, Vol. I., p. 169; Whitaker's Genuine History of the Britons, p. 199.

‡ Vestiges of the Gael in Gwynedd, (North Wales), by the Rev. Basil Jones, M.A., 1851.

a real personage, and of whose history something is known, the very important question may be asked, is there any record showing that he had under his command a body of Roman soldiers? or is there any record whatever existing which would afford grounds for the belief that *any* British chief ever had, at any time, a body of Roman soldiers in his pay? Until we have some evidence where-upon to ground a belief in a statement of a fact so highly improbable, we must persist in refusing to give it any credence whatever. The whole tenor of the letter to Coroticus is against the supposition, that it was written to a British chieftain. In the first paragraph he writes—"Manu mea scripsi atque condidi verba ista, danda et tradenda militibus mittenda Corotico, non dico civibus meis, neque civibus sanctorum Romanorum, sed civibus Dæmoniorum, ob mala opera ipsorum."—"I have composed, and written with my own hand, these words, to be given and delivered to the soldiers, to be sent to Coroticus, I do not say to my fellow-citizens, nor fellow-citizens of pious Romans, but to fellow-citizens of the devils, through their evil deeds." If Coroticus were a *Briton*, and the soldiers *Romans*, St. Patrick does not make the distinction; but, on the contrary, goes on alluding to both as Roman citizens. He further on speaks of himself as a Roman of the patrician order, and of his father as a Roman magistrate, facts very proper to mention in furtherance of his suit to Romans, but I submit, not likely to be used to a Welsh chief and his people. Further on he calls Coroticus a "slave," and elsewhere addressing him in the third person, he asks—"Unde enim Coroticus cum suis sceleratissimis rebellatoribus Christi, ubi se viderunt (quum inter mulierculas baptizatas præmia distribuuntur) ob miserum regnum temporale, quod utique in momento transeat, sicut nubes, vel fumus, quod utique vento dispargitur?"—"Where then will Coroticus with his most wicked rebels against Christ find themselves (when rewards are being distributed among poor baptized women) on account of his miserable temporal kingdom, which shall surely pass away in a moment, like a cloud, or smoke which is dispersed by the wind." Thus speaking of Coroticus as a slave (which historians inform us Carausius had originally been), and of him and his adherents as "most wicked rebels," and alluding to his "temporal kingdom," and in the next sentence to "unjust kings," epithets and allusions, each and all of them peculiarly appropriate to Carausius, but none of them at all applicable to the Welsh chief. St. Patrick, it must be observed, styles them,

"most wicked rebels against Christ;" but it is clear that if the letter were addressed to Carausius and his soldiers, as the writer maintains it was, that the fact of their being rebels against the Roman Emperor suggested the epithet, and that the Saint used the phrase with a double meaning, and applied it with a double force. It is also very important to observe how peculiarly appropriate to the case of Carausius is the prophetic announcement by the Saint of his sudden downfall, and how exactly his prediction was verified by the event. The unstable position and doubtful prospects of Carausius—his rebellion against the power of the Roman Empire, and his conduct during his usurpation of Britain, fully warranted St. Patrick in venturing to make such a prediction; whilst there was nothing whatever in the case of Caredig which would have warranted him in so denouncing the British chief, who was only waging a justifiable warfare against a people who had invaded his country.

And, again, he adjures any "servant of God," into whose hands the Epistle should come, "that he be a ready bearer of this letter," and "that he should read it before all the people, and in the presence of Coroticus himself;" this certainly implies that the letter was going amongst a people by whom the Latin language was pretty generally understood, and that "all the people" under the immediate sway of Coroticus understood the Latin language, in which it was written, a supposition quite untenable, as regards the people of any British, and more especially of any Welsh chief, fifty years after the Romans had left the island, and their language had, we must suppose, ceased to be spoken there. The generation conversant with the Romans had passed away, and the disturbed and distressed state of the country in the interval, consequent upon the repeated incursions of the Picts and Scots, and the invasion of the Saxons, had been fatal to schools and to learning of every description, so that we may conclude that the Roman language was almost quite forgotten, more especially in that part of the island now called Wales, with which, it is certain, the Romans had less intercourse than with any other part of Britain. To all this it may be urged, that the Epistle was intended principally for the Roman soldiers, and that it would be read to the other parties through an interpreter. To this objection I reply, that the Epistle, though addressed to Coroticus, was really designed as an address to "all his people." St. Patrick, through the whole of it, speaks *at* him, and not *to* him. It would have been quite useless for the saint to have written such

a letter so strongly condemning the conduct of Coroticus and his soldiers, to be read to all the people, in a language known only to themselves, and with every temptation either to misinterpret it, or even to suppress it altogether, more especially when we take into account the fact, that St. Patrick in the letter pronounces a sentence of excommunication against them, for having been the perpetrators of the slaughter and rapine of the Christian converts. "Quapropter sciat omnis homo timens Deum, quod a me alieni sunt et a Christo Domino meo, pro quo legatione fungor, patricidæ, fratricidæ, lupi rapaces 'devorantes plebem Domini ut cibum panis,' sicut ait; 'iniqui dissipaverunt legem tuam, Domine,' qua in supremis temporibus Hiberione optime benigne plantata atque instructa erat, favente Deo. Non usurpo, partem habeo cum his quos advocavit, et prædestinavit Evangelium prædicare, in persecutionibus non parvis, usque ad extremum Terræ. Etsi invidet inimicus per tyrannidem Corotici, qui Deum non veretur, nec sacerdotes ipsius, quos eligit et indulsit illis summam divinam sublimem potestatem, 'quos ligarent super terram, ligatos esse et in cælis.' Unde ergo (quæso) plurimum sancti et humiles corde, adulari talibus non licet, nec cibum nec potum sumere cum ipsis, nec eleemosynas ipsorum recipere debere, donec crudeliter effusis lachrymis satis Deo faciãnt, et liberent servos Dei et ancillas Christi baptizatas, pro quibus mortuus est et crucifixus. 'Dona iniquorum reprobis Altissimus, qui offert sacrificium ex substantia pauperum, quasi qui victimat filium in conspectu patris sui. Divitiæ (inquit) quas congregabit injustus evoimentur de ventre ejus; trahit illum Angelus mortis. Ira Draconum multabitur, interficiet illum lingua colubri.' Comedet autem eum ignis inextinguibilis. Ideoque 'væ qui replent se quæ non sunt sua, vel, quid protest homini ut totum mundum lucretur, et animæ suæ detrimentum patiatur.'"—"Wherefore, let every man who fears God know that they are alienated from me, and from Christ my Lord, for whom I fill the office of an ambassador, who are patricides, fratricides, ravening wolves, 'Devouring the Lord's people like bread,' as he saith, 'Lord, the wicked have made void thy law,' where in these latter times Ireland has been exceedingly well and prosperously planted and instructed, under the favour of God. I do not usurp anything. I have a part with those whom He hath called, and pre-ordained to preach the Gospel, under no small persecutions, even to the outermost part of the earth. Yet the enemy hath acted invidiously towards me, through the tyranny

of Coroticus, who fears not God, nor his priests whom he hath chosen, and hath committed to them the superlative, divine, sublime power, that 'whomsoever they should bind on earth, should be bound in Heaven.' Whence, therefore, I beseech you who are most eminent for piety, and humble in heart, that it be not permitted to any one to be flattered by these men, nor to take meat nor drink with them, nor to receive their alms, until they make satisfaction to God for the tears which they so cruelly caused to be shed by us, and liberate the servants of God, and the baptized hand-maidens of Christ, for whom he was crucified and died. 'The Most High rejects the offerings of the unjust: he who offers a sacrifice from the substance of the poor, is like one who offers a son as a victim in the sight of his father;' 'Riches,' saith he, 'which the unjust man shall collect shall be vomited from his belly: the angel of death drags him off. He shall be punished with the fury of dragons, and the tongue of the adder shall slay him, and fire inextinguishable shall devour him.' And hence, 'Woe to those who fill themselves with things which are not their own,' or 'What does it profit a man if he may gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?'

It would be very strange, indeed, if he wrote a sentence of excommunication in the language of the excommunicated, and in a language which was not understood by those who were to carry the sentence into effect. And here it may not be unimportant to take into consideration the fact, that St. Patrick did exercise his episcopal authority to excommunicate those concerned in the outrage upon the Irish Christian converts. That St. Patrick, being a Bishop in Ireland, should pronounce a sentence of excommunication against a British prince and some of his people, towards the close of the third century, when the limits of episcopal jurisdiction were not accurately, or perhaps in any way defined, is quite possible; but that he should have done so after the middle of the fifth century, may admit of a doubt.

The advocates of the existence, in the fifth century, of the Coroticus to whom St. Patrick addressed the Epistle, aware that there are no records whatever to produce in support of their theory, and unable to produce a particle of evidence to support the belief of the incursion of the Welsh chief into Ireland, yet argue on the possibility of such an event having occurred on some particular occasion. An attentive perusal of the Epistle will con-

vince any unprejudiced person, that the soldiers of the Coroticus to whom St. Patrick wrote, had made repeated incursions into Ireland. In one part of the Epistle he writes, "Tu toties interficis, et vendis illos genti exteræ ignoranti Deum." "You who *so often* slay them, and sell them to a foreign nation ignorant of God;" and in another place, "Et liberent captivas baptizatas quas ante ceperunt."—"And liberate the baptized captive women whom they *formerly* took." Here is incontrovertible evidence of repeated incursions into Ireland, and of a regular trade in captive slaves—a trade which it is well known that Carausius certainly carried on—"You who *so often* slay them, and *sell* them to a foreign nation ignorant of God."

On an attentive perusal of the Epistle, we also find that we are not warranted in coming to the conclusion that Coroticus, or Carausius, was present in person, or actually leading the body of men who committed the outrage, which was the immediate cause of St. Patrick's writing the Epistle, and that the *former* letter of which he speaks was addressed to him. On the contrary, the more reasonable conclusion to be arrived at, is, that a body of soldiers, acting under the authority and by the command of Coroticus, or rather Carausius, but not under his personal leading, had committed the outrage, and that St. Patrick wrote to "them," the "former letter," as he says, "Et misi epistolam cum sancto presbytero, quem ego ex infantia docui, cum clericis, ut nobis aliquid indulgerent de præda, vel de captivis baptizatis quos cæperunt (sed) cachinnos fecerunt de illis."—"And I sent a letter by a holy presbyter (whom I have taught from his infancy), along with other clergymen, begging that *they* would grant to us some part of the booty, or of the baptized captives whom *they* had taken, but *they* made sport of them." And that in consequence of this insulting rejection of his petition by the soldiers, he wrote the "Epistle" to Coroticus himself, as he says, "Manu mea scripsi, atque condidi verba ista, danda et tradenda militibus, mittenda Corotico."—"I have composed, and written with my own hand, these words, to be given and delivered to the soldiers, *to be sent* to Coroticus." That Coroticus did not actually lead the party, may also be inferred from the following passage :—"Ecce, oves tuæ circa me laniantur, atque deprædantur a supradictis latrunculis, jubente Corotico."—"Lo thy sheep are torn in pieces around me, and plundered by *these aforesaid marauders, under the orders of* Coroticus."



That Carausius, the Roman Emperor of Britain, sent out his ships and men on such expeditions, and "ravaged the coasts of the ocean," is an historical fact; but that Coroticus, the imaginary British chief, did so, is unsupported by any evidence whatever, and is, besides, so improbable, that it must be rejected. Taking into account the certain evidence we possess of the state of Britain about the middle of the fifth century, it would require a very large amount of evidence in its favour to make such a story even credible, whereas, we have none whatever.

Before we give up the consideration of the Epistle to Coroticus, it is necessary to direct the attention of the reader to the following very important passage in it:—"Consuetudo Romanorum et Gallorum Christianorum mittunt viros sanctos idoneos ad Francos et cæteras gentes, cum tot mil. solidorum, ad redimendos captivos baptizatos."—"It is the custom of the Roman and Gallic Christians to send trustworthy pious persons to the Franks and other nations, with many thousand 'solidi,'\* for the purpose of redeeming baptized captives." In order that we may duly estimate the force of this statement in the consideration of this question, it becomes necessary that we should contrast the state of Gaul towards the close of the third century, in the time of Carausius, with that which it presented in the latter half of the fifth century. We are certain that at the former period Gaul was a Roman province, inhabited jointly by the Romans and native Gauls; and we are also certainly informed that the Franks were then making hostile and predatory incursions into the province; and therefore it is certain that St. Patrick's remark would be peculiarly appropriate to the state of affairs then existing. On the contrary, about the middle of the fifth century, the time at which the saint is generally supposed to have written the Epistle to the Welsh chief, Gaul had ceased to form a Roman province; the Franks had established their kingdom in it, and were absolute masters of the northern parts of it; whilst the Romans, if not entirely expelled, had only a precarious and doubtful tenure of some small portion of the southern half of the country, in which the Goths had established a kingdom. The statement in the Epistle evidently alludes to a period of time in which the Romans and Gauls were joint occupants of the province, as we may infer from the language of St. Patrick, that the Christians of both nations acted on those

\* *Solidus*, a Roman coin of the value of one-third of an ounce of gold.

occasions in concert, and applies with peculiar force to the time of Carausius, whilst it applies with very much lessened force to the posture of affairs after the middle of the fifth century, if it apply at all.

As this is an important passage I give it also as it stands in the version of the Epistle adopted by the Bollandists—"Consuetudo Romanorum Gallorumque Christianorum (est) mittunt presbyteros sanctos (et) idoneos ad Francos et exterar gentes cum tot millibus solidorum ad redimendum captivos baptizatos."—"It is the custom of the Roman and Gallic Christians to send presbyters, both pious and trustworthy, to the Franks and other *foreign* nations, with many thousand 'solidi,' for the purpose of redeeming baptized captives." If this version of the passage be correct, as it probably is, as a scribe may have easily made the error between words so very similar, it is almost conclusive upon the point now under consideration, as it is absolutely certain that the Franks could not, at any time, in or about the middle of the fifth century, be classed among *foreign* nations.

They had been subdued by Julian in A.D. 358, and continued to be from that time the firm allies of the Romans: and Gaul having been in the very beginning of the fifth century almost quite abandoned by the Roman Legions, and having been overrun by several German nations, the Franks had entered upon and taken possession of a defenceless and desolated country, and so occupied the northern parts of Gaul over which they were, during the whole course of the fifth century, gradually extending their kingdom. The Epistle to Coroticus, in which the above passage occurs, must therefore have been written at some time before the middle of the fourth century, for the very simple reason that at no time during the latter half of that century were the Franks carrying on any warfare, or making hostile incursions into the Roman province of Gaul; and at no time, in or about the middle of the fifth century, when St. Patrick is said to have written this letter, could he have called them a foreign nation with respect to the Gauls.

Before closing my remarks on the Epistle, it may be necessary to notice an objection that may occur to the reader, which is, that the name Coroticus cannot represent Carausius. If we could be perfectly certain that St. Patrick wrote the word exactly as we now find it, there might be much in the objection, but as the several manuscripts of the Epistle, now in existence, vary so much from

each other in so very many places, it must be admitted that we have no version of it which can be pronounced to be a perfectly accurate copy of the original letter. The objection, otherwise, seems to be capable of being very easily answered. It appears plain that the Saint never had any personal intercourse with the soldiers of Carausius : he must, therefore, have acquired his knowledge of the name only through some Celtic speaking persons, and passing through that medium, under the circumstances, it may have reached him exactly as we now find it ; but supposing that it did reach him correctly pronounced, he would write it Corosius, or Corotius ;—how easy the change, whether by accident or design, from that to Coroticus !

It is acknowledged by all the learned men who are best qualified to form an opinion on the subject, that Christianity prevailed more or less in Ireland, long before A.D. 432, the year in which St. Patrick is generally supposed to have first come to Ireland as a missionary. To the writer it appears plain that there are not only grounds for believing that the Saint came to Ireland, and that the Christian religion had obtained an extensive footing there, long before that date, but that there is abundant evidence to prove the certainty of these facts ; and that there existed then a well-established Church there, and, moreover, that that Church differed, if not in faith, certainly in practice and discipline from the then Church of Rome. The first evidence in point of time, and also in importance, to be adduced in support of these assertions, is taken from the Four Masters. In the Annals compiled by them there is found the following passage :—"The year of Christ, 266. Forty years was Cormac, son of Art, son of Conn, in the sovereignty of Ireland, when he died at Cleiteach, the bone of a salmon sticking in his throat, on account of the *siabhradh* (*genii*) which Maelgenn the Druid incited at him, after Cormac had turned against the Druids, on account of his adoration of God in preference to them. Wherefore a devil attacked him at the instigation of the Druids, and gave him a painful death. It was Cormac who composed *Teagusc-na-righ*, to preserve manners, morals, and government in the kingdom. He was a famous author in laws, synchronisms, and history ; for it was he that established law, rule, and direction for each service, and for each covenant, according to propriety ; and it was his laws that governed all that adhered to them to the present time. It was this Cormac, son of Art, also,

that collected the Chronicles of Ireland to Teamhair, and ordered them to write the Chronicles of Ireland in one book, which was named the Psalter of Teamhair. In that book were [entered] the coeval exploits and synchronisms of the kings of Ireland with the kings and emperors of the world, and the kings of the provinces with the monarchs of Ireland. In it was also written what the monarchs of Ireland were entitled to [receive] from the provincial kings, and the rents and dues of the provincial kings from their subjects, from the noble to the subaltern. In it also were [described] the boundaries and meares of Ireland from shore to shore, from the province to the cantred, from the cantred to the townland, and from the townland to the traighid of land. [These things are celebrated in the *Leabhar-na-n-Uidhri* ; they are evident in the *Leabhar Dinnsenchusa*.]” Here is a most important statement ; and the Four Masters, in writing their Chronicle, aware, no doubt, of the very extraordinary and important character of the facts which they were recording, have given the authorities on the credit of which they made the relation.

The learned Dr. Keating also informs us in his *General History of Ireland*,\* that “Cormac, the monarch of Ireland, it must be observed, was a prince of great virtue, and strict morality, and very exact in the worship of the Deity, as far as the light of nature informed him ; and his piety and devotion found acceptance and a reward from above, for the merciful God was pleased to deliver him from the obscurity of pagan darkness, and enlightened him with the faith of the Gospel. He was converted seven years before his death, during which time he refused to adore his false deities, and instead of bowing to his idols, he did homage as a devout Christian to the true God.” The account given by him of the circumstances attending the death of King Cormac, similar to that given by the Four Masters, leaves us no room whatever to doubt that he was assassinated by some persons employed for that purpose, and instigated thereto by the Druids. We also learn from Dr. Keating’s History, that Cormac had before his death “given orders to his servants not to bury him in the royal sepulchre of the Irish monarchs ; for he would not have his dust mixed with that of his pagan predecessors. His commands were obeyed, and another place was appointed for his interment ; but as his body was carrying on a bier, after the custom of the country, the

\* *General History of Ireland*, by Jeffrey Keating, D.D., Vol. i., p. 428.

river Boyne was so enlarged, and overflowed its banks in so wonderful a manner, by the wicked arts of these infernal spirits, that the bearers could not attempt to pass over the channel ; for these furies of hell would not admit his body to be buried in a temple devoted to their service, because he refused to conform to their abominable rites, and introduced a way of worship in opposition to the established religion. This stratagem these cursed spirits made use of three several times, in order to prevent the interment of the body ; but the servants, entrusted with the care of the funeral, did not desist from their duty, for notwithstanding these dreadful discouragements, they made a fourth attempt to carry the royal corpse over the river, but the body was whirled out of their hands by a hurricane, and dropped into the stream, which was so rapid, that it rolled it along to Rosnariogh, where it was washed off from the carriage. Upon this account that part of the river Boyne is distinguished by the name of Athfuaid to this day ; for Ath in the Irish language signifies a ford, and the word Fuaid, a bier, which, being joined, are pronounced Athfuaid. The body when it was found, was taken up and buried solemnly at Rosnariogh." The figurative language employed, and the introduction of supernatural agency, show that there is in this narration an evident endeavour, by the distortion of facts, to conceal the truth in order to serve some particular purpose. The thing is however too transparent. We learn from this narrative, notwithstanding the pains taken to misrepresent the true facts of the case, that a violent struggle took place between the Druids and their party, and those who acted in obedience to the directions of the deceased monarch, about his burial, in which the latter came off victorious, and succeeded in carrying out his wishes. Here are most important statements, the force of which it is impossible to overestimate. Here we have evidence that not only had King Cormac rejected the superstitions of Paganism, and embraced Christianity, but that a very large party about his court, and we may therefore conclude in his kingdom also, had adopted the same opinions. That King Cormac as a Christian should, in order to show his abhorrence of the superstitious rites of paganism, give orders that his body should not be buried with his "pagan predecessors," and according to their customs, is easy of belief, but if he had been a solitary convert, whom did he leave behind him to carry his wishes into effect, and to bury him after a Christian fashion? How is it possible to

believe that any small number of persons would have dared to undertake the performance of the obsequies of the deceased king in any other manner than that prescribed by custom, and in opposition to the religious sentiments and wishes of the royal family, the nobles and principal persons in the kingdom, including the Druids, who as a body were possessed of a power and authority second to none in the state? The fact that a struggle did take place about his burial, proves that even at the time of King Cormac's death, the Christians must have formed a strong and influential party in his kingdom. Here is direct evidence to prove that King Cormac Ulfada, monarch of Ireland, had before the year 277, which some writers record as the date of his death, renounced paganism, embraced Christianity, and was at the time of his death engaged in a struggle with the Druids for the suppression of their superstition; and further, that the *Senchus Mor*, that great revision of the ancient laws of Ireland, made for the purpose of rendering them conformable to the Christian religion, and also the *Leabhar-na-Ceart*, or Book of Rights, however they may have been remodelled at subsequent periods, certainly had their origin with him. These matters are well worthy of the strictest scrutiny, and the closest consideration. Here we have an account of the conversion from paganism to Christianity of King Cormac, acknowledged on all hands to have been one of the greatest and most celebrated of the ancient monarchs of Ireland; and there is not one word to explain the means by which he was converted. Why are the records quite silent on so extremely important and interesting a subject? When they have recorded all the petty battles fought by him, why are they so silent on the subject of so very extraordinary an event as his conversion to Christianity? Does not this silence appear remarkably suspicious, and afford very strong reasons for suspecting that the truth has been suppressed, in order to serve some particular purpose? The reason for suppressing the evidence of his conversion by St. Patrick has been already suggested. No reason whatever can be assigned for the suppression of the evidence of his conversion by any other means, or by any other person.

In connexion with this subject, and in order to *prove* that St. Patrick was cotemporary with King Cormac, the next witness whom I propose to produce is not only trustworthy, but is also above the suspicion of even the slightest partiality, inasmuch as

he is taken from the very centre of the enemies' camp. The late lamented Dr. John O'Donovan, confessedly one of our best Irish scholars and antiquaries, and, beyond all dispute, an acknowledged authority on such subjects, has, in his introduction to "The Book of Rights," edited by him in 1847 (at page 3), given an account of St. Benean, and also his pedigree in the following words:—"Benean was of a Munster family, being descended from Tadhg MacCian (the grandson of Oilioll Olum, King of Munster), to whom King Cormac MacAirt, about the year 254, had granted the territory of Cianachta Breagh, which comprised the district around Daimhliag (Duleek), and all the plain from thence to the hills of Maeldoid, at the River Life (Liffey). The occasion of his conversion to Christianity is described in all the old Lives of St. Patrick, and in Benean's own Life. St. Patrick being at Leath Chathail (Lecale, in Ulster), and having determined on celebrating the Easter of the year 433 near Teamhair or Tara, where he knew the Feis Teamhrach was then to be celebrated by the king and all his toparchs, took leave of his northern friend and convert, Dichu, and sailing southwards, put into the harbour of Inbhear Colpa (Colp), the mouth of the Boinn, or Boyne. There he left his boat in care of one of his disciples, and set out on foot through the great plain of Breagh (Bregia), in which the palace (of Tara) was situate. On their way, and not long after landing, they went to the house of a respectable man (*virī nobilis*—a nobleman), named Sescnean, where they were entertained, and passed the night. St. Patrick is said on this occasion to have converted and baptized Sescnean and all his family, among whom was Benean, then seven years old, to whom, at the baptism, Patrick gave the name of Benignus, from his benign disposition. This boy became so attached to St. Patrick, that he insisted on going along with him. St. Patrick received him with pleasure into his society; and Benignus thenceforth became one of his most favourite disciples:" and in a note on the same page, "According to the genealogies of the saints, collected by the O'Clerighs, Benean, bishop and primate, was the son of Sescnean, son of Laei, son of Tadhg, son of Cian, son of Oilioll Olum." Now, assuming these statements to be true, and there are no reasons to doubt the truth of them, Benean was the great-grandson of Tadhg MacCian; and supposing, as is conjectured, that St. Patrick came to Ireland about the year 254, the story of his first meeting with Benean, when seven years of age, would not only be

extremely probable, but would come so far within the range of ordinary natural occurrences as to leave it almost impossible to cast a doubt upon it, as we cannot imagine any reason, or suggest any motive, for its fabrication. We have, besides, another good reason for giving full credit to the story. We know that St. Patrick did educate some boy who became one of his most trusted followers and assistants; and it appears to be extremely probable that it was to Benean he alluded in the Epistle, as the "*sancto presbytero, quem ego ex infantia docui*"—"holy presbyter, whom I have taught from his infancy"—and that he was the person to whom he intrusted the very delicate mission to the soldiers of Coroticus. Now, we find in the Annals of the Four Masters several records relating to King Oilíoll Olum and his descendants: his own death is recorded at the year 234, when he must have been a very old man, as there is another record of his sons having fought at the battle of Ceanfeahbrat, forty-eight years before that date; another that seven of his sons fell at the battle of Magh Mucruimhe, in the year 195; another that his son Cian, father of Tadhg, died in the year 241; and another, that Tadhg MacCian, his grandson, fought at the battle of Crinna, in the year 226, where his assistance was so valuable that King Cormac gave him the abovementioned very extensive territory as a reward for his services on that occasion. Now supposing, as is probable, that Tadhg MacCian was about twenty-five years of age when he fought at the battle of Crinna, and that St. Patrick met Benean for the first time about the year 280, or even at a somewhat earlier date, Tadhg MacCian being then, if living, about eighty years of age, it would be a thing of the most ordinary occurrence that his great-grandson, Benean, should be seven years old at that date. The genealogy quoted by Dr. O'Donovan, and given under the sanction of his name, clearly proves that Ségnean (the grandson of Tadhg MacCian), born probably about the year 250, and his son, Benean, flourished during the latter half of the third century; and that it is utterly impossible, in the natural course of events, that they could have been living after the year 432.

We have the testimony of Dr. O'Donovan on another important point. In the introduction to "*The Book of Rights*," commenting on a passage in the writings of Colgan, he says: "The passage, which we have just cited out of Colgan's extracts from the *Life of St. Benignus*, has been overlooked by our writers. It es-



tablishes the important fact that Benean commenced (inchoavit) the celebrated Psalterium Casselense . . . That passage further proves that Benean put together and entered in the Psalter an account of the rights (jura) of the monarchs of all Ireland, and especially of the kings of Munster. Now one of the poems in our book, in treating of those rights, says that Benean put in the Psalter of Caiseal the history of each Munster king, and his income; and the conclusion reasonably follows, that Benean commenced and composed some such Book of Rights as this and placed it in the Saltair Chaisil. Edward O'Reilly (in his "Irish Writers") saw the fallacy of attributing the authorship of the Book of Rights, in its present form, to St. Benean, and expressed his doubt as to the fact, as the 'language, and some internal evidences in the composition, shew it to be at least enlarged and altered in a period nearer to our own times.'" These observations were made by the learned Doctor for the purpose of correcting a prevalent, but erroneous, idea, that The Leabhar-na-g-Ceart, or Book of Rights, "in its present form," was the work of St. Benean; whereas, the book now before us is an "edition," "enlarged and altered in a period nearer to our own times," of the work composed by St. Benean. Of the fact that he was the original author of The Book of Rights there cannot be the slightest doubt. Now, we find in Dr. O'Donovan's translation of it, at page 22, that one of the prerogatives of the King of Uladh (Ulster) was, "The commencement of his hosting, also, always at Eamhain Macha." We find, also in a poem, commencing in page 33, setting forth an account of the stipends payable by the King of Caiseal, when elected monarch of Eire, to the provincial kings, and of the escorts which they, the provincial kings, were bound to give to the monarch, from one royal residence to another, in making the periodical circuits of the kingdom, —the authorship of which is ascribed to "the gifted Benean, the son of Sescnean"—it is (at page 37) set forth, that it is the duty of "the chief (or king) of green Tulach Og" to provide "twelve days' refecton" for the monarch, and to "escort him to the noble Eamhain," where he got "a month's entertainment from the Oir-ghialla." And again, we find, in the last poem in the book, of which it is recorded that "Benean sang this song," the King of Ulster mentioned twice, in pages 241 and 249, as "the King of Ultonian Eamhain." Now, in the Annals of Ireland by the Four Masters, it is recorded that, in the year 331, the then King of

Ulster was slain in fight by the three Collas—Eamhain was burned by the victors—and the royal family of Ulster ceased to reside there—“did not dwell therein since.” See *Annals of the Four Masters*—“The age of Christ, 331. The Battle of Achadh-leith-dheirg, in Fearnmhagh [was fought] by the three Collas against the Ulstermen, in which fell Fearghus Focha, son of Fraechar Foirtriun, the last King of Ulster, [who resided] at Eamhain. They afterwards burned Eamhain, and the Ulstermen did not dwell therein since. They also took from the Ulstermen that part of the province [extending] from the Ríge and Loch n-Eathach westwards.” It is necessary to state here, for the information of the reader, that the site of the ancient palace of Eamhain, is in the present County of Armagh, which formed a portion of the territories thus acquired by the three Collas, and afterwards enjoyed by their descendants. And we learn, also, from Dr. O'Donovan, on the authority of several writers quoted by him, that upon their defeat by “the three Collas, the ancestors of the people called Oirghialla,” and the destruction of the palace of Eamhain, in A.D. 331, the King of Ulster and his people were driven from that country, and were ever afterwards confined within the circumscribed territories comprised in the present counties of Down and Antrim; and that Eamhain remained “deserted” and “without a house until A.D. 1387, when Niall O'Neill, presumptive King of Ulster, erected a house within it for the entertainment of the literati of Ireland.” The only inference which it is possible to draw from these passages is, that Benean wrote whilst Eamhain and the surrounding country were in the possession of the Kings of Uladh, and whilst it was yet a royal residence, and whilst it was the custom for the monarch to visit it, and consequently before its destruction, A.D. 331. It may certainly be alleged that the custom of escorting the monarch to, and giving him a month's entertainment on, the spot where the palace of Eamhain had stood, still continued even after its destruction; this, if the right to refection and escort was very seldom exercised, may be possible; but it is extremely improbable that, under such circumstances, any writer would designate a spot of ground whereon had stood a ruined palace—built of wood and burned to the ground, and which had long before ceased to be a residence—as “the noble Eamhain,” without making any allusion whatever to its past history.

It would be perfectly absurd to suppose that Benean, if he

lived and wrote in the middle of the fifth century, would have designated the King of Uladh as "the King of Ultonian Eamhain," and have stated it to be one of his prerogatives "always to commence his hosting from Eamhain Macha," nearly, if not fully, two centuries and a half after that prince and his people had been expelled from it and the region about it. It appears plain that the introduction of the Oirghialla as the owners of Eamhain, is one of those instances in which the original Book of Rights was "altered and enlarged," in order to suit altered circumstances. And here it is most important to remark, at page 145, how it is stated in the poem now referred to, that "This difficulty rests upon the race of the Collas, . . . that they know not their own stipends :—" *This difficulty*," it appears plain to the writer, arose from the fact that they were not in existence as a tribe or clan at the time when the original Book of Rights was composed by Benean ; and that the omission of them by him, in consequence of their non-existence at the time when he wrote, was the sole cause of their ignorance of their stipends ;—or rather, as we may infer, of the ignorance of "Cormac Mac Cuileannain, Bishop-King of Caiseal, or Munster," who, about "the beginning of the 10th century, altered and enlarged" the original work of St. Benean. The "difficulty" lay in the absence of any record of the rights of the Oirghialla from the book which he was revising. If Benean were born, as they say, about the year 425, and composed his Book of Rights about, or at any time after, the year 450, it is not credible that the Oirghialla, having been then in existence as a royal tribe for upwards of two centuries, should "not have known their own stipends ;" and it is perfectly absurd to suppose that their rights had not been clearly defined before the "beginning of the 10th century," when the clan had been in existence as such for very nearly six hundred years. The "*difficulty*" under which the author of the Book of Rights "in its present form" laboured, was, that he derived no assistance whatever in setting forth the rights of the Oirghialla from the original work of Benean, and that he was obliged to have recourse to other means of obtaining the requisite information on the subject. This view of the matter is fully borne out by the poem itself, which, although it commences with the statement that "This difficulty rests on the race of the Collas . . . that they know not their own stipends,"—yet goes on to set them fully and clearly forth :—If the Oirghialla were really ignorant of their own stipends, whence did

King Cormac Mac Cuileannain obtain his knowledge of them? And if their rights had been ascertained and set forth by Benean, where lay the "difficulty?"

There is another passage in the *Leabhar na-g Ceart* to which the writer wishes to direct particular attention: in page 15, one of the prerogatives of the King of Laighin (Leinster) is stated to have been,—“To drink by [the light of] fair wax candles, at Dinn Riogh, is very customary to the King.” In a note on this text, Dr. O'Donovan remarks,—“This is a curious reference, as it would appear that the kings of Leinster did not reside at Dinn Riogh, since the period of the introduction of Christianity.” Doubtless, it was to him, and must be to those who agree with him in thinking that St. Patrick introduced Christianity into Ireland, and that Benean composed his *Book of Rights*, in the middle of the 5th century, extremely “curious.”

We have thus the genealogy of Benean, which proves that he flourished in the latter half of the third and beginning of the fourth centuries; and we have also his own writings in corroboration of the truth of that fact, and this upon testimony coming from various sources, and, as the writer begs may be observed, from parties who, without any exception, held and have recorded opinions on the subject of St. Patrick's mission to Ireland quite opposed to his views.

It is quite unnecessary for the writer to quote here the several passages found in the works of ancient writers which prove the existence of Christianity in Ireland during the fourth century, as the fact is generally acknowledged. Dr. Lanigan says, “It is, however, universally admitted that there were Christian congregations in Ireland before the mission of Palladius, which took place in 431.”\* The existence of Christian *congregations* involves the existence of a Christian ministry, and of a Christian church.

For a belief in the fact that Christianity prevailed very extensively in Ireland, and that there existed a well-established Church there before the year 432, and, moreover, that that Church differed, if not in faith, certainly in practice, from the Church of Rome, the statements of Prosper of Aquitaine, a cotemporary writer (he was born in A.D. 402, and died in A.D. 463), afford the most important, and, as having been quite unconnected with Ireland, the most impartial evidence. In his chronicle he writes—“Ad Scotos in

\* An Ecclesiastical History of Ireland, by the Rev. John Lanigan, D.D., Vol. i., p. 9.

Christum credentes ordinatur a Papa Cælestino Palladius, et primus Episcopus mittitur."—"Palladius was ordained by Pope Celestine, and sent to the Scots believing in Christ as their first bishop."

Here is indisputable testimony to the existence of a prevalent Christianity in Ireland. Prosper does not say that there were "some few Christian families" scattered here and there in Ireland, and that Palladius was sent to them, and to assist in the conversion of the heathen, but that he was "sent to the Scots (Irish) believing in Christ as their first (or chief) bishop." Now, this may mean either that he was the first bishop, in point of time, sent to Ireland by the Pope (which without doubt he was), or that he was commissioned and sent as (with the intention that he should be) the chief bishop (or primate) of a well-established Church, already under the guidance and control of bishops of its own. The latter interpretation of the word, is to a certain extent, sanctioned by the learned Archbishop Ussher. In order to put the true construction upon the reading of the whole sentence, it is absolutely necessary to take into account the character and disposition of the writer. Prosper was a most active and zealous member of the Church of Rome, a strenuous supporter of its bishops, and a warm admirer and partizan of Pope Celestine; and was, moreover, an eager and ardent controversialist. Now, if there existed in Ireland in his day, as the writer contends there did, a Christian Church, differing in doctrine and discipline from the Church of Rome, and having no connexion therewith, it is easy to comprehend that Prosper, knowing this, and perhaps, as residing at a distance, not knowing exactly on what points they differed, would be unwilling to recognise it as a branch of what he believed to be the Catholic Church, and, therefore, spoke of them under the general term of "believers in Christ."

Whilst we have this statement in Prosper's chronicle under consideration, let us follow Palladius into Ireland. Another writer (Colgan) informs us that "He founded there some churches, viz., Teach-na-Roman, or the House of the Romans, Killfine, and others; nevertheless he was not well-received by the people, but was forced to go round the coast of Ireland, towards the North," &c. Now, there cannot be the slightest doubt about the truth and accuracy of this statement; the event proved its truth. The certainty of the fact that Palladius came to Ireland, and, after a short residence, left the country, has never been questioned. He left the country

because "*he was not well received by the people.*" By what people? By a heathen people? or by a people "believing in Christ?" If he came to a heathen people, they must have been in some measure a civilised people, and also a people disposed to receive him favourably, because they permitted him to "found some churches." What cause can be assigned for their change of mind? and why did they distinguish one of his churches as Teach-na-Roman? Palladius, though possibly of Roman descent, is said to have been a native of Gaul. How comes it that none of the churches founded by St. Patrick, who was a Roman, and boasted of his Roman parentage, was ever called Teach-na-Roman? Can it be conceived to be possible that Palladius, coming amongst a heathen people, instead of preaching the Christian religion, commenced to expound to them the particular tenets and discipline of the Church of Rome? But Prosper says that he came to a people "believing in Christ!" If, as is suggested, he was sent to a few scattered Christian families, expressly for the purpose of combining them into the unity of a church, what reason can be given for his so soon deserting them? If they were few in number and scattered, and devoid of the power of combination which only a regular ministry could give them, how is it possible to conceive that they could have resisted him?—or even that they should have attempted it! That Palladius was permitted to found several churches,—that the first or principal of those churches was distinguished by the natives as "Teach-na-Roman,"—and that his teaching was considered obnoxious, and was successfully resisted,—I say, these facts combined go a great way to prove that he came amongst a civilised and Christian people, who soon discovered, and very clearly understood, the difference in doctrine and practice between their own Church and that of Rome, of which Palladius was recognised by them as, and, no doubt, acknowledged himself to be, the emissary; and further, that the Christian portion of the population was either so numerous, or possessed of so much influence, that he, finding his labours fruitless, was obliged to leave. If the Christians then in Ireland consisted of a few families scattered here and there, and were permitted to dwell in the land, and to practice their religious observances, it is by no means probable that the surrounding heathens would have interfered with Palladius.

There is another passage in the writings of Prosper, found in his "*Liber contra Collatorem*," which requires consideration, inas-

much as great stress is laid upon it by the advocates of the theory that Patrick came to Ireland in A.D. 432. "Unde et venerabilis memoriæ Pontifex Cælestinus, cui ad catholicæ Ecclesiæ præsidium multa Dominus gratiæ suæ dona largitus est, sciens damnatis non examen iudicii, sed solum poenitentiae remedium esse præstandum: Cælestium, quasi non discusso negotio audientiam postulanti, totius Italiæ finibus jussit extrudi: adeo et præcessorum suorum statuta, et decreta synodalia inviolabiliter servanda censebat, ut quod semel meruerat abscindi, nequaquam admitteret retractari. Nec vero segniore cura ab hoc eodem morbo Britannias liberavit, quando quosdam inimicos gratiæ solum suæ originis occupantes, etiam ab illo secreto exclusit Oceani, et ordinato Scotis Episcopo, dum Romanam insulam studet servare catholicam, fecit etiam barbaram Christianam."—"Wherefore also the Pontiff Celestine, of venerable memory, to whom the Lord bestowed bountifully many gifts of His grace for the protection of the Catholic Church, knowing that for those who are already condemned the remedy to be applied is not a re-consideration of the judicial sentence, but only repentance, ordered Celestius, who demanded a further hearing, as if his case had not been fully examined and discussed, to be driven out of the borders of all Italy. So much the more, he thought, would both the statutes of his predecessors and the decrees of councils be kept inviolate, if that which once deserved to be cut off he should by no means permit to be recalled. And with no less careful celerity he delivered the Britannias from the same disease, when he drove out even from that secret place of Ocean certain enemies of grace, who were settling in the soil of their origin; and, by ordaining a bishop for the Scots, whilst he laboured to keep the Roman island Catholic, made also the barbarous island Christian." We may here pause to observe that this sentence, read along with that already cited, taken from the Chronicle, demonstrates that by the term Scots he meant the people of Ireland, as the term "barbarous island" could not have applied to the country now called Scotland, inasmuch as it could not properly be called an island; and even granting that it might be so called, yet it could not be said that it never formed a part of the Roman Empire, which is the meaning of the word "barbarous" in the sentence, a term applied by the Romans to all countries lying outside their own dominions. This latter extract from the writings of Prosper can only be interpreted as a too sanguine

expectation of the success of Palladius, because the "*Liber Contra Collatorem*," from which it is taken, bears internal evidence that it was written shortly after the death of Pope Celestine ("of venerable memory"), and during the pontificate of his immediate successor, as the following sentence, in the latter part of it, proves,—"*Quod ne hypocritarum obtineatur insidiis, confidimus Domini protectione præstandum, ut quod operatus est in Innocentio, Zozimo, Bonifacio, Cælestino, operetur in Xisto, et in custodia Dominici gregis hæc sit pars gloriæ, huic reservata pastori, ut sicut illi lupos abegere manifestos, ita hic depellat occultos.*" — "Wherefore that no advantage may be obtained by the wiles of hypocrites, we trust, under the protection of the Lord, that it will be evinced, that that which operated in Innocent, Zozimus, Boniface, and Celestine, may operate also in Xistus, and that in the guardianship of our Lord's flock, this may be part of the glory reserved for this pastor, that as it was granted to the former to drive away open, so he may expel concealed, enemies." As Prosper in this sentence expresses a confident expectation of what the conduct of Xistus as the successor of Cælestine would prove to be, we must infer that it was written very shortly after his accession, an event which took place on the 26th April, 431. In the statement that Celestine "by ordaining a bishop for the Scots made also the barbarous island Christian," there are two facts announced, viz.—that "Celestine ordained a bishop for the Scots," and that "the barbarous island was made Christian." Several interpretations of this sentence have been suggested. The most reasonable is, that Prosper in his zeal for the Church of Rome, and anxiety to laud Pope Celestine, wished to give him the credit of bringing Ireland (previously Christianized) into the pale of that Church, and consequently exaggerated the effects of the labours of Palladius as a missionary of the Roman Sec. But read both sentences now under consideration, and interpret them as we may, there stand, under the sanction and authority of Prosper, as a cotemporary historian, two facts clearly announced, viz.—that "Palladius was sent as bishop to the Irish believing in Christ;"—and that "the barbarous island (Ireland) was (at the time when he was writing) Christian." Now, as the *Liber contra Collatorem*, in which the latter passage occurs, was, as has been already shown, written during the pontificate of Xistus, and therefore, though most probably immediately after his accession, yet certainly before A.D. 440, the year in which



that Pope died, this latter statement so made by Prosper must have been written before that date. How is it possible to reconcile these statements of Prosper with the state of affairs in Ireland, if, as is generally supposed, St. Patrick had lately commenced, and was then engaged in, the conversion of a heathen people? And here it is necessary to remark, that the absence of any notice of St. Patrick by Prosper, who lived and wrote at the very time when the Saint is supposed to have been successfully engaged in the conversion of the heathen, forms also a very important item in the consideration of this question. What reason can be assigned for, or what explanation given of, the fact that he notices the unsuccessful missionary Palladius, and omits any mention of the successful missionary Patrick? If St. Patrick were then actively and prosperously engaged under the authority of the Church of Rome, is it possible to conceive that Prosper would have taken no notice of him? If St. Patrick were successfully engaged in the conversion of the heathen in Ireland without the sanction of the Roman Pontiff, and, consequently, in some measure in opposition to the Church of Rome, and that, too, immediately after an emissary of that Church had been sent thither, Prosper's statement would involve a deliberate falsehood, because he attributes to the action of Pope Celestine the fact that the barbarous island was made Christian.

On the supposition that St. Patrick came to Ireland in *A.D.* 432, it is impossible to believe that his efforts to convert the heathen could have been so successful as to warrant Prosper in making such a statement, certainly before the year 440. In either view of the case Prosper's statement read literally is simply untrue; in order to reconcile it with truth, it is absolutely necessary that we give an unqualified assent to this proposition, viz., that Celestine ordained St. Patrick, and sent him to Ireland, and that the Saint succeeded in the course of a very few years in making the island Christian—and this proposition resolves itself into two parts;—the first, that St. Patrick was sent by Celestine;—and the second, that he in a few years made the island Christian. If the first part of this proposition be false, and fall to the ground, the second part, besides having no evidence to support it, and being incredible on its own merits, must fall along with it, as if Celestine did not send St. Patrick, he had neither act nor part in making Ireland Christian, in either a longer or shorter space of time. Now, there is nothing whatever to lead to the belief that St. Patrick was sent by

Pope Celestine; on the contrary, the silence of Prosper himself on the subject, forms the very strongest possible evidence against such a belief. The only way in which it is possible, reading Prosper's two statements in juxtaposition, to reconcile them with each other, and the latter with any degree of truth, and the conclusion to which we must come, is, that the Irish were then a Christian people, and that Prosper in his zeal and love for the Church of Rome in general, and for Pope Celestine in particular, and writing, very soon after the death of that prelate, and before Palladius was known to have failed, "the wish being father to the thought," exaggerated to an extraordinary extent the effect produced by the mission of Palladius, describing an attempt to bring Ireland within the pale of the Church of Rome, as what he called, and perhaps thought to be, "making the island (really) Christian."

Neither need we be surprised that this language of Prosper requires to be read with some qualification. In Bower's "History of the Popes," on the subject of the Pelagian heresy, and the mission of Germanus and Lupus, in 429, we read, "The Catholics, having no prospect of relief from their own pastors, had recourse to those of Gaul, who being affected with their complaints, immediately summoned a great council, and chose, with one voice, St. Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, and St. Lupus, Bishop of Troyes, to pass over into Britain, and there maintain the Catholic cause. Thus Constantine, a presbyter of Lyons, and after him, Bede. But Prosper, who flourished likewise in this century, writes that the two prelates were sent into Britain by Celestine. The Gallican bishops, perhaps, acquainted the Pope, with the choice they had made, and he approved it; which was enough for Prosper, a notorious flatterer of the Popes, to ascribe the whole to Celestine." We thus learn, on the authorities cited by Bower, that Pope Celestine had very little, perhaps nothing, to do with "keeping the Roman island Catholic." He had just as little to do with "making the barbarous island Christian!"

Dr. Ledwich very justly remarks that, "It has been seen what little necessity there was for the Pope to send missions to Ireland, where a regular hierarchy had been long settled. The necessity was just the same as for sending Austin to England, where was a numerous and learned clergy, and so respectable as to occupy seats in all the continental councils, in the fifth century.

. . . Hence the uniform language of Romish writers in every

age is, to call that people barbarous, and that nation pagan, which did not implicitly yield to their lust of wealth and power. Thus Bishop Lawrence, in Bede, tells us, Pope Gregory sent him and Austin to preach the Gospel in Britain, as if it never before had been heard there, whereas, the latter met seven British Bishops who nobly opposed him."

Before we give up the consideration of the writings of Prosper of Aquitaine, the writer desires to express his firm conviction, that upon the sentence, "Ad Scotos in Christum credentes ordinatur a Papa Cælestino Palladius, et primusepiscopus mittitur"—"Palladius was ordained by Pope Celestine, and sent to the Scots believing in Christ, as their *first* bishop"—hangs the whole fiction of St. Patrick's mission to Ireland in the fifth century. The Romish writers of the Lives of the Saint, having determined to claim him as a member and missionary of their Church, would doubtless, as having no reason to depart from the truth, have truly stated the time of his coming to Ireland, but finding in the pages of Prosper, a well known writer of their own Church, with whose chronicle it was impossible to tamper, a statement that Palladius was the *first* bishop sent to Ireland by the Pope, they found themselves compelled to transfer the mission of St. Patrick to a date subsequent to that at which it was known that Palladius had visited Ireland, and so introduced him as the immediate successor of that missionary. And finding another statement in Prosper's writings, that Pope Celestine had made Ireland Christian, they found themselves also compelled to furnish him with a commission from that prelate : and as it was known that Pope Celestine had died in the year 431, they were thus obliged to date his commission accordingly, and despatching Palladius much sooner than it is probable that he really departed from the island, set our apostle to work in that year. It must, however, occur to every person who is not accustomed, without scrutiny, to give implicit credit to any story, however extraordinary and improbable it may be, that they have devoted an incredibly short space of time to all the events of which they have given us the relation as having occurred within it. The year 430 is the earliest date fixed by any writer for the mission of Palladius ; but according to most of the annalists, following Prosper, who, as a cotemporary writer, must be an indisputable authority on this point, he was ordained a bishop and came to Ireland in A.D. 431. Now, in the Annals of the Four Masters, it is stated that "Saint Patrick

was ordained bishop by the holy Pope Celestine the First, who ordered him to go to Ireland, to preach and teach faith and piety to the Gaeidhil, and also to baptize them," in A.D. 431, and that he arrived in Ireland in the following year. And in the Annals of Ulster it is recorded that "Patrick arrived in Ireland in the year 432." We are thus expected to believe that Palladius received ordination at the hands of Pope Celestine, in the city of Rome,—travelled to Ireland,—built at least three churches, and, as we must conclude, gathered three congregations—failed in his mission!!—(he must have been very sanguine, indeed, and have entertained most extravagant and extraordinary ideas of success),—the news of his failure was carried back to Rome,—Patrick appeared, we must suppose, just in the nick of time,—was also ordained a bishop,—travelled to Ireland,—and arrived there in the year 432,—and that all these transactions took place within the short space of about one year!!!

If we had nothing to guide us in determining the question of the greater or less prevalence of Christianity in Ireland in the beginning of the fifth century but the writings of Prosper, we might, perhaps, find some difficulty in deciding to which of his two apparently rather contradictory statements, above referred to, we should attach the more weight, though a critical examination of them on their own merits, and apart from other considerations, would appear to lead us to the certain conclusion, that both combined prove that the Irish were then a Christian nation; but we have, fortunately, unquestionable authority, which may enable us to come to a decision on this point. The very learned and venerable Bede, himself a monk, and priest of the Church of Rome, in his Ecclesiastical History, writes,—"*cujus anno imperii octavo (Theodosius junior), Palladius ad Scottos in Christum credentes a Pontifice Romanæ Ecclesiæ Cælestino primus mittitur Episcopus,*" "in the eighth year of whose reign (Theodosius the younger), Palladius is sent by Cælestine, Pontiff of the Roman Church, to the Scots believing in Christ as their first Bishop,"—and he makes no allusion whatever to, and therefore ignores, the statement that "Pope Celestine made Ireland Christian."

And what says the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle?—"430. Her Palladius se biseop wæs onsended to Scottum, thaet he hiera geleafan trymede from Galesino tham papan."—"A. 430. This year Palladius, the bishop, was sent to the Scots by Pope Celestine,

that he might confirm their faith.\* Mark this well! Here is no mention of his having been *their first bishop*, and no limitation of his mission to a certain portion of the Scots! But, "Palladius, the bishop, was sent to (the nation of) the Scots that he might confirm their faith"—"*That he might confirm their faith!!*" Not one word about converting the heathen!

In Fordun's *Scoto Chronicon* also, there is the following passage,—"Durst, qui alias vocabatur Nectane filius Irbii annis xlv. Hic ut asseritur, centum annis vixit et centum prælia peregit. Quo regnante Sanctus Palladius episcopus a beato Papa Cælestino missus est ad Scotos docendos, longe tamen ante in Christo credentes."—"Durst, who was otherwise called Nectane, son of Irb (named elsewhere Erp), (reigned) xlv years. He, as it is asserted, lived a hundred years and fought successfully a hundred battles. During whose reign Saint Palladius the bishop was sent by the blessed Pope Cælestine to teach the Scots, *long before, however, believing in Christ.*"

Here we have positive and direct evidence, and that, too, coming from their nearest neighbours—the Anglo-Saxons in England, and the Scots in Caledonia—that the Irish were, *long before* the advent of Palladius, a Christian people. When we take into account the fact that both Bede, and, as we may also assume, the compilers of the Chronicle, had before them the assertion of Prosper, that—"Pontifex Cælestinus . . . ordinato Scotis episcopo, dum Romanam insulam studet servare catholicam, fecit etiam barbaram Christianam"—"The Pontiff Cælestine, by ordaining a bishop for the Scots, whilst he laboured to keep the Roman island catholic, made also the barbarous island Christian"—we must conclude that they had the very strongest reasons for disputing the truth of it. Should we even construe it literally, we must yet acknowledge that Bede and the compilers of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle had better means of obtaining, and we must therefore conclude, a more intimate knowledge of the history and posture of affairs in Ireland than Prosper of Aquitaine can be supposed to have had; and besides this, in the statement made by him now under consideration, he had Pope Celestine and his acts alone in view, whereas they were engaged in writing the history of their own church, and in recording events relating to their own people, in Britain, and to the Irish in so far as they were connected

\* See the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, translated by J. A. Giles, D.C.L.

with them. In order duly to estimate the weight of the record in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, and of the statement made by Bede concerning the mission of Palladius, and of the silence of both on the assertion by Prosper that Pope Celestine had made Ireland Christian, it is necessary to take into account the restraint under which every member of the Church of Rome lay, when writing on any subject in any way connected with that Church. It is well known that all books, and writings of what kind soever, that were considered to be in any way injurious to its interests, were at once placed under papal interdict, and, if possible, unhesitatingly suppressed or destroyed; whilst the writers made themselves liable to the most severe censure, and placed themselves in a position attended with more or less personal inconvenience and some danger. We must, therefore, construe the silence of Bede and the compilers of the Chronicle on the subject of Prosper's statement, as not only an implied dissent, which it certainly is, but as the most direct and decided contradiction which they dared venture to give to it. If, moreover, we take into account the certain information which we gather from Bede, that the independence of the Church in Ireland had, long before his time, attracted the attention, and aroused the jealousy of the Roman Pontiffs, we will be enabled rightly to estimate the difficulty under which any writer laboured in dealing with a statement made by a person of such acknowledged authority as Prosper of Aquitaine, whom the Church of Rome had canonized and enrolled in the list of saints: to have openly controverted any portion of his writings would have been deemed to be no less than sacrilege!

It is here necessary to notice an entry which appears in some copies of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, viz.,—"A. 430. This year Patrick was sent by Pope Celestine to preach baptism to the Scots." This entry, regarding it merely upon its own merits, is so obviously repugnant in every sense to that which precedes it, recording the mission of Palladius, that it is not credible that any annalist could have recorded at the same time two such extremely opposite and contradictory statements; but as Bede, who wrote in the beginning of the eighth century, took no notice whatever of it, or of the alleged mission of Patrick, we are forced to the conclusion, either that he gave no credit to it, and that he had, of course, the very strongest reasons for disbelieving it, or that it is, as is much more probable, an interpolation made at some subsequent period. This

interpolation at whatsoever time made, whether before or since the eighth century, affords an instance of the lengths to which those, who fabricated the tale of St. Patrick's mission to Ireland in the fifth century, went, in order to bolster up their story.

The works of the venerable Bede, whose authority as an historian is indisputable, appear to the writer to dispose of the whole question of the mission of St. Patrick in the fifth century. His writings prove much, his silence proves more. We learn from his Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation, written by him in the beginning of the eighth century, that the ancient Church in Scotia (Ireland), as well as that in Britain, had no connexion whatever with Rome, further than this, that several of the popes and their emissaries laboured assiduously for centuries to bring the Irish into communion with their church. We have first the mission of Palladius in the fifth century, which is acknowledged to have been unsuccessful. The next account we find in Bede is of Bishop Laurentius the successor of St. Augustine, the great emissary of Pope Gregory, who "being advanced to the degree of an archbishop, laboured indefatigably, both by frequent exhortations and examples of piety, to raise to perfection the foundations of the church, which had been so nobly laid. In short, he not only took care of the new church formed among the English, but endeavoured also to employ his pastoral solicitude among the ancient inhabitants of Britain, as also the Scots, who inhabit the island of Ireland, which is next to Britain. For when he understood that the course of life and profession of the Scots in their aforesaid country, as well as of the Britons in Britain, was in many things not truly ecclesiastical, especially that they did not celebrate the solemnity of Easter at the due time, but thought that the day of the resurrection of our Lord was, as has been said above, to be celebrated between the 14th and the 20th of the moon; he wrote (A.D. 605), jointly with his fellow-bishops, an exhortatory epistle, entreating and conjuring them to observe unity of peace, and conformity with the church of Christ spread throughout the world. The beginning of which epistle is as follows:—'To our most dear brothers, the lords-bishops, and abbots throughout all Scotland (Ireland), Laurentius, Mellitus, and Justus, servants of the servants of God. When the apostolic see, according to the universal custom which it has followed elsewhere, sent us to these western parts to preach to pagan nations, we came into this island, which is called Britain, without possessing

any previous knowledge of its inhabitants. We held both the Britons and Scots in great esteem for sanctity, believing that they had proceeded according to the custom of the universal church; but coming acquainted with the errors of the Britons, we thought the Scots had been better; but we have been informed by Bishop Dagan coming into this aforesaid island, and the Abbot Columbanus in France, that the Scots in no way differ from the Britons in their behaviour; for Bishop Dagan coming to us, not only refused to eat with us, but even to take his repast in the same house where we were entertained.' This same Laurentius and his fellow-bishop wrote a letter to the priests of the Britons, suitable to his rank, by which he endeavoured to confirm them in Catholic unity, but what he gained by so doing the present times still declare."\* ["Laurentius Archiepiscopi gradu potitus strenuissime fundamenta Ecclesiæ quæ nobiliter jacta vidit, augmentare, atque ad profectum debiti culminis, et crebra voce sanctæ exhortationis, et continuis piæ operationis exemplis provehere curavit. Denique non solum novæ, quæ de Anglis erat collecta, Ecclesiæ curam gerebat, sed et veterum Britanniæ incolarum, necnon et Scottorum qui Hiberniam insulam Britanniæ proximam incolunt, populis pastorem impendere sollicitudinem curabat. Siquidem ubi Scottorum in præfata ipsorum patria, quomodo et Brittonum in ipsa Britannia vitam ac professionem minus Ecclesiasticam in multis esse cognovit, maxime quod Paschæ sollemnitatem non suo tempore celebrarent, sed, ut supra docuimus, a decimaquarta Luna usque ad vicesimam Dominicæ Resurrectionis diem observandum esse putarent; scripsit cum Coepiscopis suis, exhortatoriam ad eos epistolam; obsecrans eos, et contestans unitatem pacis et Catholicæ observationis cum ea quæ toto orbe diffusa est Ecclesia Christi, tenere; cujus videlicet epistolæ principium hoc est;—'Dominis carissimis fratribus Episcopis vel Abbatibus per universam Scotiam (Hiberniam), Laurentius, Melilitus et Justus, Episcopi, servi servorum Dei. Dum nos Sedes Apostolica, more suo sicut in universo orbe terrarum, in his Occiduis partibus ad prædicandum gentibus paganis dirigeret, atque in hanc insulam, quæ Britannia nuncupatur, contigit introisse antequam cognosceremus: credentes quod juxta morem universalis Ecclesiæ ingrederentur, in magna reverentia sanctitatis tam Brittones, quam Scottos venerati sumus; sed cognoscentes Brittones, Scottos meliores putavimus. Scottos vero per Daganum Episcopum

\* The venerable Bede's Ecclesiastical History of England. Edited by J. A. Giles, D.C.L.



in hanc, quam superius memoravimus, Insulam, et Columbanum Abbatem in Gallis, venientem, nihil discrepare a Brittonibus in eorum conversatione didicimus. Nam Daganus Episcopus ad nos veniens, non solum cibum nobiscum, sed nec in eodem hospitio quo vescebamur, sumere voluit.' Misit idem Laurentius cum Coepiscopis suis, etiam Brittonum Sacerdotibus literas suo gradui condignas, quibus eos in unitate Catholica confirmare satagit. Sed quantum hæc agendo profecerit, adhuc præsentia tempora declarant."

The writer might rest his whole case against the Roman mission of St. Patrick, with perfect confidence, on the evidence thus afforded by the foregoing quotations from Bede, and the above cited letter. Bishops Laurentius, Mellitus, and Justus, were the companions and assistants of St. Augustine, the great missionary of the See of Rome to England; they were the representatives of the Pope and Church of Rome in Britain; and had been selected for that important mission by Pope Gregory the Great, doubtless, on account of their great ability, learning, and intelligence; and were, we must suppose, well versed in the history of their church: they were, besides, as Bede relates, both energetic and "indefatigable." They came to Britain just one hundred years after Patrick, the alleged Roman missionary, is said to have died, and yet they had never heard of him; and after a residence of ten years in Britain, during which time they had ample space and opportunity for learning something of the history of the Christian Church in Ireland, if they knew it not before, they wrote this letter, yet we do not find in the portion of it given by Bede, even the most remote allusion to the existence of any connexion having ever subsisted between the Church of Ireland and that of Rome; but, on the contrary, the most positive and direct evidence of their antagonism. I have said that they had ample opportunity of obtaining a knowledge of the Irish Church during a ten years' residence in Britain: we learn from their own letter, that they had, besides, probably before they came to Britain, sought for and obtained information on the subject from the Abbot Columbanus in France, than whom no person could have been better qualified to instruct them. Columbanus was himself an Irishman, a former pupil of St. Comgall, abbot of the celebrated monastery of Bangor, in Ulster, by whose advice, and with the assistance of twelve young men selected from the students in whose schools, he undertook a mission to Gaul for the purpose of evange-

lizing the Franks; and became the founder and first abbot of the celebrated abbey and scholastic institution of Luxeuil, established on the model of those institutions then existing in Ireland. Now, Columbanus was born in A.D. 543, exactly fifty years after St. Patrick is said to have died, and, therefore, might have conversed with some individuals who had actually seen the Saint in their youth, if our apostle had lived at that time, and yet he never mentioned him in connexion with the Church of Rome. Columbanus, doubtless, gave Bishop Lawrence and his companions a true history of the Church in Ireland, and very probably, of St. Patrick also; but he told them, as they inform us themselves, that the Irish people differed altogether in ecclesiastical matters from the customs of the Church of Rome, or, as they are pleased to call it, "the universal Church,"—"Scottorum, et Brittonum vitam et professionem minus ecclesiasticam in multis esse"—"the course of life and profession of the Scots and Britons was, in *many respects*, not truly ecclesiastical." Here we have two celebrated men, both of whom were born about fifty years after the date at which St. Patrick is said to have died,—one of them, we must suppose, well versed in the history of the Church of Rome, and the other equally well versed in that of the Church in Ireland—and yet neither of them had ever heard of the Roman missionary Patrick, who is said to have evangelized the Irish people in the preceding century, or of any connexion whatever between their respective churches, whence we must conclude that none such had ever subsisted. And we have also Bishop Dagan, another cotemporary, born most probably about the same year as Columbanus, who must have told them that the Irish differed from the Romans, not only in practice and discipline, but also in the more important matters of faith and doctrine, and that, too, very widely indeed, as they inform us that he "not only refused to eat with us (them), but even to take his repast in the same house where we (they) were entertained!!!"

We learn also from Bede that about the year 634, "Misit idem Papa Honorius litteras etiam genti Scottorum, quos in observatione sancti Paschæ errare compererat, juxta quod supra docuimus: solerter exhortans, ne paucitatem suam in extremis terræ finibus constitutam, sapientiores antiquis sive modernis quæ in orbem erant Christi Ecclesiis æstimarent; neve contra Paschales computos, et decreta Synodaliū totius orbis Pontificum, aliud Pascha celebrarent:"—"The same Pope Honorius also wrote to the Scots (Irish)

whom he had found to err in the observance of Easter, as has been shown above, earnestly exhorting them not to think their small number, placed in the utmost borders of the earth, wiser than all the ancient and modern churches of Christ throughout the world; and not to celebrate a different Easter, contrary to the Paschal calculation, and the synodical decrees of all the bishops upon earth."

We may here pause to remark, that the attack made by the adherents of Rome upon the Irish, about the undue celebration of Easter, formed only a part of their plan of assault, and was skilfully made use of by them to cover their real designs, which aimed at the complete subjugation of the Irish Church to the Papacy. A very intelligent writer on this subject has well observed,—“The Easter question, and the still more insignificant one about the tonsure, were the two points of Irish practice which the Romanists assailed, both in Britain and in France, when they were labouring to prove the Irish Church in error, with the ultimate view of thus convicting some of its forms, and then inducing it to submit to papal dictum in its principles and its practices generally.”\*

We have thus abundant testimony, and incontrovertible, Pope Honorius and several other dignitaries of the Church of Rome being themselves the witnesses, to prove that the Church in Ireland, was, during the sixth and seventh centuries, quite independent of the See of Rome; and from their silence on the subject, we must infer that it never had been otherwise, more especially as, supposing that the Irish had been converted to the faith of Christ by an emissary of the Church of Rome in the fifth century, it would be impossible to account for their so sudden departure from her communion, and for their obstinacy, persisted in for centuries, in resisting her repeated endeavours to set them right in the matter of the proper day of the year on which to celebrate the festival of Easter, a matter, too, in which the Irish appear to have been in the wrong, and the advocates of the Roman Church to have had the right on their side.

The silence of Bede on the subject of St. Patrick's alleged mission in the fifth century is of itself sufficient to dispose of the whole question. If he had taken no notice of ecclesiastical affairs in Ireland, that fact would have afforded a satisfactory explanation of his silence; but as he has taken so many opportunities to make mention of matters connected with the Church in Ireland, and more especially as he has recorded the, comparatively speaking,

\* Annotations on Dr. D'Aubigne's Sketch of the Early British Church. By M. Webb.

very unimportant mission of Palladius, it is incredible that he would have passed over in silence that of St. Patrick, and the very extraordinary results consequent thereon, if such a very remarkable achievement as the conversion to Christianity of the Irish people had been accomplished barely two centuries before the time in which Bede himself lived.\*

A very strong argument in support of the opinion that the Irish were a Christian people long before the year 432 is drawn from the *Senchus Mor*, lately translated and published by some of our most learned Irish scholars, acting under a royal commission issued to effect that purpose. Our most eminent Irish scholars, who have been, for some time past, and are now engaged, in translating the ancient laws of Ireland, have come to the conclusion, that "this great revision of the laws of Erin" was really made in the years 438—441, and that the *Senchus Mor* was written at that date. The extract from the *Annals of Ireland by the Four Masters*, and also the extracts from *O'Donovan's Book of Rights*, already given, afford very strong grounds for believing, if not clear proof of the fact, that it was composed at a very much earlier date, and that, like the *Book of Rights*, the *Senchus Mor*, in "its present form," is just a second "edition" of the original work composed by the directions of King Cormac Ulfada in the third century. But, assuming that the composition of the *Senchus Mor* was commenced in the year 438, as the *Annalists* allege, and that the ancient laws of pagan Erin were then revised and amended, and so altered as to render them conformable to the Christian religion, it appears to me that it is necessary to possess a most extraordinary amount of credulity to be able to believe that St. Patrick came to Ireland to a heathen people in the year 432. We are required to believe that, in the space of six short years, he had so far converted the whole nation, and acquired so much influence over their rulers, that they consented, at his request, to revise their code of laws, and adapt them to the Christian religion. If Ireland had been then under the sway of one absolute monarch, it might be possible to conceive, that having effected his conversion, St. Patrick might have been able to persuade him to revise the laws; but even had this been the case, it would still be very difficult to believe, as history and experience combine to teach us, that the religion or superstition of a people is just the very last thing which a ruler will

\* The Venerable Bede was born in A.D. 673.

undertake to subvert. But, seeing that the island was, at that time, divided into five principal provincial kingdoms, which were again subdivided into numerous petty principalities, all in a great measure quite independent of each other, it seems impossible, without a very great amount of credulity, to believe that St. Patrick had, in the course of so very short a space of time as six years so far converted the whole island, and gained such an influence over the monarch, and the other kings, chieftains, and rulers of it, as to induce them to revise, and adapt to the new religion, their whole code of laws, both general and international, or "interterritorial." The writers of the fabulous Lives of St. Patrick were far "wiser in their generation" than the learned men of the present times; *they* attributed the conversion of the Irish people, within a space of *sixty years*, to the miraculous powers of the Saint; the learned men of these times, whilst affecting to disbelieve the power of the Saint to work miracles, yet give credit to a story, which, if true, sets forth by far the greatest and most extraordinary miracle ever wrought since the introduction of Christianity into the world, viz.—the conversion of a people inhabiting so large a space of the surface of the earth as Ireland, within a period of *six years*. Our blessed Lord Himself,—I say it with reverence,—whilst on earth, wrought no such miracle. His labours, during three years, were confined to a country which, though more densely populated, was not nearly so extensive as Ireland, and yet how small a portion of its people believed on him! Not one of the Apostles, with the acknowledged power of working miracles, I believe, I might almost say, all of them together, were able to convert so many people, inhabiting such an extent of country, in so short a space of time. Passing down to the present times, and to the history of the Christian Church for the last seventy years, with all the wealth devoted by England and America to missionary purposes, aided by an easy and rapid commercial intercourse, a printing press, and the general spread of civilization, where do we find an instance of so sudden and miraculous a conversion of a whole people, or of such a majority of them, as would warrant their rulers in revising their whole code of laws, and adapting them to a new religion, so recently, and for the first time, preached to them?

A perusal of the text of that part of the *Senchus Mor* which has been lately translated and published, will convince any, except the most credulous, that it is impossible to believe that the Chris-

tian religion had been preached for the first time in Ireland in the year 431—only seven years before the date assigned for the commencement of the composition of that work—that, in fact, Christianity had been for the first time introduced into Ireland in the year 431, and that the revision of the pagan laws of the island, in order to render them conformable to the Christian religion, was commenced in the year 438.

As to the "Introduction" to the *Senchus Mor*, it is clearly a mere prefatory addition made at a subsequent and far distant date, and must have been written long after the body of the work was composed, as is evident by the mention in it of "the stone of Patrick" as existing "at this day" at Rathguthaird: and the allusion in it to the payment of tithes and first-fruits, which could only exist as a custom, or as a legal claim, at a time when Christianity was and had for some time been the universally-acknowledged religion of the land, proves also *one* of two things, either that the Christian religion had been introduced into Ireland long before the year 438, and was then the established religion of the state, *or*, that the "Introduction" was written long after the body of the *Senchus Mor* was composed. Taking also into account the absurd and incredible story of the slaying of Patrick's charioteer—the earthquake—the eclipse of the sun—the overturning of Teamhair—and the extraordinary story about Dubhthach Mac Ua-Lugair, royal poet and chief Brehon of Erin, "who was a vessel full of the grace of the Holy Ghost," and whose instruction in, and conversion to the Christian religion, are left wholly unaccounted for, together with other fabulous and inconsistent statements made in it, very little, if any, reliance can be placed on it as an historical document.

Let us now come to text of the *Senchus Mor*, and I would ask, how is it possible that any person having read that portion of it already published, can believe that Christianity was introduced into Ireland only seven years before the composition of that code of laws? How is it possible to believe that St. Patrick—a stranger—a young man, the son of a deacon, or of a decurio—possessed probably of no great amount of worldly wealth—and one who had so lately been a slave amongst them—could have been able, in the very short space of six years to persuade the Irish people to throw aside altogether their ancient superstition,—to adopt a new religion,—and to revise their laws, and in those laws so revised, to place him or any Christian bishop or pilgrim on an equal footing or rank

with their kings? See page 79—"For the king excels all in testimony; for he can, by his mere word, decide against every class of persons except those of the two orders of religion or learning who are of equal rank with himself, as the doctor, or the bishop, or the pilgrim (exile of God)." If the *Senchus Mor* were written in the year 438, it proves most incontestably that the Christian religion was at that date, and had been for a very considerable space of time previously, the established and universally acknowledged religion of the land; it provides protection for "the furniture of a church," and there cannot be the slightest doubt that this means a Christian church, as the word "*αλσα*," in the original Irish text, is evidently derived from the Greek *εκκλησια*—see page 123; it provides also a certain amount of protection, or rather privilege, for a person "observing the forty nights" (days of Lent)—see page 195; "it imposes a penalty "for digging a church-yard, for breaking bones;"—and as it is clear that this enactment can only apply to human remains, and as the practice of burying the dead within the enclosures set apart for their places of worship was introduced by the Christians, and was by no means a pagan custom, it proves that the word "church-yard" in this law meant the enclosure and grave-yard attached to a Christian church; and as there is no provision made against the violation of a grave in any other place, it proves, moreover, that at the time when the *Senchus Mor* was written, it was the *universal custom* to bury the dead in the yards set apart for the Christian churches—see page 203; its laws were revised "by the advice of the Church—(*ecclaisi*—*εκκλησιας*—*ecclesiæ*) !!! from the customs of the laity" !!!—see page 209; it provides for the recovery of a fine for "injuring the utensils of the altar;" and the use of the word "*altoire*" in the original Irish text, evidently derived from the Latin *altare*, proves that this meant an altar in a Christian church, as both the term *altoire* and the thing signified by it were of Christian introduction—see page 233; it exempts "clerics" from the penalty incurred by "lookers-on" at the commission of an offence—see page 243; and also otherwise exempts persons "gone on a pilgrimage, or to obtain the communion"—see page 267; whilst there is not a single word in it to indicate the existence of a Druid, or of a pagan place of worship in Ireland; and we find the Christian bishop, or even the Christian pilgrim (exile of God) placed in the same rank as their kings. The total absence of any mention of, or allusion to, the Druids and their

places of worship, in the laws contained in the *Senchus Mor*, forms the most conclusive evidence that the former were then extinct, and that the latter had ceased to exist as such. I again ask, how is it possible, giving due weight to the independent testimony thus afforded by the *Senchus Mor*, to believe that St. Patrick came to Ireland in A.D. 432, and that, in the short space of the six following years, he had succeeded not only in establishing the Christian religion all over the island but had also accomplished the utter subversion and complete overthrow of the pagan superstition, and the power and authority of the Druids? We learn from Cæsar\* that the Druids possessed in reality much greater authority over the people than did the kings or chiefs,—they retained in their hands much legislative power, besides a large part of the judicial and executive authority, and enjoyed many other privileges and immunities. Is it possible even to conceive that a class of men, urged on by the very strongest motives which can affect the human heart to give the fiercest opposition to a change of affairs, and to the introduction of a new state of things, would quietly succumb,—acknowledge that all their previous religious instructions were false,—resign their legislative powers,—lay down all their rule and au-

\* Illi (Druides) rebus divinis intersunt, sacrificia publica ac privata procurant, religiones interpretantur. Ad hos magnus adolescentium numerus disciplinæ causa concurrit, magnoque ii sunt apud eos honore. Nam fere de omnibus controversiis publicis privatisque constituunt; et, si quod est admissum facinus, si cædes facta, si de hereditate, si de finibus controversia est, iidem decernunt; præmia prenasque constituunt: si qui aut privatus aut publicus eorum decreto non stetit, sacrificiis interdicunt. Hæc prena apud eos est gravissima. Quibus ita est interdictum, ii numero impiorum ac sceleratorum habentur; iis omnes decedunt, aditum eorum sermonemque defugiunt, ne quid ex contagione incommodi accipiant: neque iis petentibus jus redditur, neque honos ullus communicatur. His autem omnibus Druidibus præest unus, qui summam inter eos habet auctoritatem. Hoc mortuo, si qui ex reliquis excellit dignitate, succedit. At si sunt plures pares, suffragio Druidum deligitur: nonnunquam etiam de principatu armis contendunt. Hi certo anni tempore in finibus Carnutum, quæ regio totius Galliæ media habetur, considunt in loco consecrato. Huc omnes undique, qui controversias habent, conveniunt, eorumque iudiciis decretisque parent. Disciplina in Britannia reperta, atque inde in Galliam translata esse exestimatur; et nunc qui diligentius eam rem cognoscere volunt, plerumque illo, discendi causa, profisciscuntur. Druides a bello abesse consueverunt, neque tributa una cum reliquis pendunt: militiæ vacationem omniumque rerum habent immunitatem. Tantis excitati præmiis, et sua sponte multi in disciplinam conveniunt, et a propinquis parentibusque mittuntur. Magnum ibi numerum versuum ediscere dicuntur. Itaque nonnulli annos vicenos in disciplina permanent: neque fas esse existimant ea literis mandare, quum in reliquis fere rebus, publicis privatisque rationibus, Græcis literis utantur. Id mihi duabus de causis instituisse videntur: quod neque in vulgum disciplinam efferri velint: neque eos, qui discant, literis confisos, minus memoriæ studere: quod fere plerisque accidit, ut, presidio literarum diligentiam in perdiscendo ac memoriam remittant. In primis hoc volunt persuadere, non interire animas, sed ab aliis post mortem transire ad alios: atque hoc maxime ad virtutem excitari putant, metu mortis neglecto. Multa præterea de sideribus atque eorum motu de mundi ac terrarum magnitudine, de rerum natura, de Deorum immortalium vi ac potestate disputant, et juventuti tradunt.—CÆSAR *De Bello Gallico*, Liber vi., cap. 13 & 14.



thority,—and permit the Christian bishops to revise their laws, and to take their seat beside the kings? It is altogether incredible. "Dionysius Halicarnassensis remarks, that a long series of years could not make the Egyptians, the Africans, the Celtes, Scythians, Indians, or any barbarous nation, forget their country gods, or alter their religious ceremonies, except they were reduced under the power of others and compelled to receive their ritual."\* The *Senchus Mor* proves, in language which does not admit of doubt or disputation on the subject, that at the time of its composition, the Christian not only was then, but had been for a long period of time, the established religion of the land.

The two first paragraphs of the *Senchus Mor* afford in themselves very strong reasons for the belief that that work was written long before the date now assigned for its composition. The account given in them of the seizure of a distress levied on the goods of Mogh, son of Nuadhat, cited as a precedent, is a narrative of facts which must have occurred before, or at the latest, about the close of the second century. They contain a relation of certain transactions which took place during the reign of King Conn Cedcorah,—Conn of the Hundred Battles, about the date of whose death there appears to be some uncertainty; Keating fixes it in A.D. 145; the *Four Masters*, in A.D. 157; the *Annals of Clonmacnoise*, in A.D. 172; whilst O'Flaherty records it as having happened so late as the year 212. The relation leaves us in some doubt as to the fact of the distress having been actually made during the life of King Conn,—doubts which are not removed by the commentators, who seem to speak with some uncertainty as to the persons who were concerned in it, which is, however, only another proof of the great antiquity of the text on which they made their comments. The explanation of the several rather unconnected facts set forth in the two first paragraphs, given by the commentators, is, that Eochaidh Belbuidhe, a brother of King Conn, having by some misdeeds provoked his anger against him, fled for refuge to Fergus Fergletheck, and whilst under his protection, was assassinated by some emissaries of King Conn, who was obliged to give the lands in question as a pledge or mortgage for the payment of the éric or fine for the murder of Eochaidh, whilst under the protection of another chief or king. Dorn, also, the mother of one of the assassins, was given in pledge for the pay-

\* *Ledwich's Antiquities of Ireland.*

ment of the fine incurred by her son, for the part which he took in the murder. Fergus, in some fit of passion, slew Dorn, and it appears that it was in order to obtain security for the payment of the fine incurred by him for this offence, that the distress, as stated in the text, was made. It is certain, then, that the earlier portion of the narrative relates to certain events which happened during the life of King Conn, and that the subsequent part of it, relating to the particulars of the distress, must have occurred, if not in the lifetime of King Conn, yet within no very distant date from his death, as Dorn, for whose slaying the distress was made, having been the mother of one of the parties by whom Eochaidh was killed, could not have been very many years younger than King Conn. We may, therefore, very safely assume that the act of making the distress took place, if not before the close of the second, yet at the latest, very early in the third century. The writers of the *Senchus Mor* had, we must suppose, some reason for selecting this particular transaction as a precedent: the events attendant on the seizure are related very circumstantially; and the history given of the transactions which occurred previously, and which led to the distress, and the reference to the eventual disposition of the lands from which the distress was taken, all tend to show that they had some motive for thus recording it. If we once admit the truth of the fact that the composition of the *Senchus Mor* was commenced during the life of St. Patrick, and before the close of the third century, it is easy to conceive that there may have been several reasons for recording this particular transaction, and adopting it as a precedent; whilst on the supposition that the writers of the *Senchus Mor* commenced that revision of the laws of Eire in A.D. 438, it is not possible to conceive a motive, or to suggest a reason, for their going back two centuries and a half for the selection of a precedent. The fact that the only historical personages mentioned in the *Senchus Mor* lived in the second century, is in itself, and in the absence of other evidence on the subject, a proof that it was written not very long after that period of time. If some complete religious revolution should take place in these kingdoms, and a revision of our laws were made to render them conformable to such change, would we expect to find that the only precedent cited in our new laws had been taken from some transaction which took place in the reign of King James I., and in which he had been a party?

Whilst we have the *Senchus Mor* under consideration, the writer wishes to draw attention to the very inconsistent absurdity into which the writers of the *Lives of St. Patrick* and the *Annalists* have been led, by their transfer of Saints Patrick and Benean from the third to the fifth century. We are told by the *Annalists* that this revision of the laws of Eire was made in the year 438, and that Benean was one of the "three saints" (Patrick being another), and one of the "nine supporting props by whom this was done,"—(see *Annals of Ireland by the Four Masters, A.D. 438*), whilst the writers of "all the old *Lives of Saint Patrick* and of Benean's own *Life*," tell us that Patrick met Benean for the first time in the year 433, when the latter was just seven years old: thus we have Benean, when only twelve years of age, styled a saint, and engaged as a principal party in revising the laws of Ireland!!! If we admit the truth of the fact that Benean was, as has been already stated, born about the year 270, and that the revision of the laws was made towards the close of St. Patrick's life, and about the end of the third, or the beginning of the fourth century, this difficulty will also vanish; and if the writer may be permitted here to add, the difficulty also created by the incredible story that the Saint succeeded in converting the whole Irish people in the short space of six years.

It is very important to notice here, whilst we have the *Senchus Mor*, and the date at which that revision of the laws was made, under consideration, the fact that Corc was, as is stated in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, and in the *Book of Rights*, one of "the three kings," and of the "nine supporting props by whom this was done." Now, Corc, King of Munster, the person here referred to, was descended from Oilioll Olum, and stood in exactly the same degree of relationship to that king as did St. Benean, both of them being the sixth in descent from him: their pedigrees, as set forth by Keating and O'Donovan, stand thus:—Corc, King of Munster, son of Luigheadh, King of Munster, son of Oilioll Flann Begg, King of Munster, son of Fiachadh Muilleathan, King of Munster, son of Eoghan Mor, son of Oilioll Olum, King of Munster:—St. Benean, son of Sescnean, son of Laei, son of Tadg, son of Cian, son of Oilioll Olum, King of Munster. King Corc, therefore, must have been cotemporary with St. Benean, and was probably his senior, as he was descended from Eoghan Mor, the eldest son of Oilioll Olum, whilst Benean was descended from

Cian, who was one of the youngest of Oilioll's sons. Now, Eoghan Mor was slain at the battle of Magh Mucruimhe, in A.D. 195; and as he fought at the battle of Ceannteabhrat, in which he slew Dadera, the Druid, the leader of the opposing forces, a fight which took place nine years previously, he must have been at the date of his death about thirty years of age; and supposing his son Fiachadh to have been born about the year 190, and allowing twenty-five years for each generation, King Corc, the great grandson of Fiachadh, must have been born about the year 265. We have thus the pedigrees of King Corc and St. Benean, two of the principal parties concerned along with St. Patrick in the task of revising the laws of Ireland, mutually corroborating each other, and the writer relies on them as proving to demonstration his proposition that St. Patrick evangelized the Irish people in the latter half of the third century, and assisted in the revision of their laws either towards the close of that, or in the beginning of the fourth century. That St. Patrick originated, and assisted in, a revision of the laws of pagan Ireland, there cannot be the slightest doubt: the fabricators of the story of his mission in the fifth century, just transferred the records of this transaction, with their own false additions to them, from their real date, along with the other records of his acts, to the fifth century; but the whole story has been so clumsily got up, that it is a matter of some surprise to the writer, that the various falsehoods and absurdities involved in it have not been detected and exposed long ere this. Dr. O'Donovan saw very clearly the falsehood of the assertion that King Corc lived in the fifth century: in his edition of the Annals by the Four Masters, in a note referring to King Corc, he writes,—“This quotation is evidently apocryphal. He was not cotemporary with King Laeghaire, or St. Patrick's mission.” How strange, that it should never have occurred to the learned Doctor, how *evidently apocryphal* is the story of St. Patrick's mission in the fifth century!

The Epistle of St. Patrick to the Irish, which is commonly called his Confession, bears internal evidence that it was written long before the fifth century. In the second paragraph of it, there is found the following creed:—“Non enim est alius Deus, nec unquam fuit, nec ante, nec erit post hunc, præter Deum Patrem ingentum, sine principio, a quo est omne principium, omnia tenentem, ut diximus; et ejus filium Jesum Christum quem cum Patre, scilicet, semper fuisse testamur ante originem sæculi spiri-

tualiter apud Patrem innarabiliter genitum ante omne principium, et per ipsum facta sunt visibilia et invisibilia, hominem factum, et morte devicta, in cœlis ad Patrem receptum. Et dedit illi omnem potestatem supra omne nomen, cœlestium, terrestrium, et infernorum, ut omnis lingua confiteatur ei, quia Dominus et Deus est Jesus Christus, quem credimus et expectamus adventum mox futurum Judicem vivorum atque mortuorum, qui reddet unicuique secundum facta sua; et effudit in nobis abunde Spiritum Sanctum, donum et pignus immortalitatis. Qui facit credentes et obedientes ut sint filii Dei et cohæredes Christi, quem confitemur et unum Deum adoramus in Trinitate sacri nominis.”—“For there is no other God, nor ever was, neither before, nor shall be hereafter, except God the Father unbegotten, without beginning, from whom is all beginning, upholding all things, as we have said; and His Son Jesus Christ, whom we bear certain witness to have been ever with the Father, before the beginning of time, spiritually with the Father, in an ineffable manner begotten before all beginning, and by Him were made things visible and invisible, and being made man, and having overcome death, He was received into heaven unto the Father. And He hath given unto Him all power above every name, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things infernal, that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and God, whom we believe, and look for His coming, who is soon about to be the Judge of the quick and the dead, [who will render unto every man according to his works; and hath poured on us abundantly the Holy Spirit, the gift and pledge of immortality. Who maketh the faithful and obedient to become the sons of God and joint heirs with Christ, whom we confess and adore one God in the Trinity of the sacred name.” The Saint certainly wrote this with the deliberate intention that it should form a creed for the use of the churches which he had founded. He either drew it up with that view, or as a confession of his own faith, framed designedly for the guidance of the churches of which he was the bishop, and to whom the Epistle was addressed, which amounts to nearly the same thing. The fact of St. Patrick’s thinking it necessary to write a creed at all forms a very strong argument in support of the proposition that he flourished at a time when it was the custom for almost every bishop to frame a creed for the use of the churches under his charge, and before the creeds now in use were by common consent adopted. Now the Nicene Creed, which was

framed in the year 325, and the Apostles' Creed, which is said to have been used by the churches in the East at a somewhat earlier date—I say, these creeds, if not in nearly general use in the latter half of the fifth century, must certainly have been known to a person occupying the position which St. Patrick is said to have done at that period;—whence, then, would have arisen the necessity for St. Patrick, if he lived in the fifth century, and more especially if he were in communion with the Church of Rome, which had adopted the Nicene Creed a full century and a half previously, to frame a creed for the use of his churches at that period of time? If our Apostle drew it up for the purpose here stated, he must have done so before the year 325, in which was held the great Council of Nice, at which the creed bearing that name was framed and adopted by the Church of Rome, a year, too, before which it is certain that the Apostles' Creed also was coming into use.

There are other, and, as the writer thinks, very cogent reasons for believing that the Saint wrote this creed at a very early date. Firstly, it is well known that the creeds used in the Christian churches during the first three centuries were framed with especial and almost exclusive reference to the second person of the Trinity, and were little else than brief expositions of the text, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved:" now this creed is evidently framed in the same spirit, as fully two-thirds of it have reference to the second person, whilst only one-third of it is devoted to the first and third persons of the Trinity; and, secondly, the whole composition of it, and more particularly the absence from it of many articles of belief brought forward in the Apostles' Creed, and in the Nicene Creed, must lead every intelligent person who studies it, certainly, at least to doubt, if not altogether to disbelieve, that the writer of it had ever seen either of them. We learn also from the account which the Saint gives of himself in his Confession, that, so far from being addicted to writing, he was, on the contrary, extremely timid about engaging in composition; and that he had even "hesitated" until very near the close of his life—"before he died," *"antequam moriar"*—to address an epistle to the Irish people: it is, therefore, extremely improbable that a person of such habits and disposition would, if he had knowledge of either the Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed, have discarded them both, and taken the trouble to frame one so very dissimilar to either of them.

These arguments in support of the antiquity of St. Patrick's writings are drawn from the Confession; but the Epistle to Coroticus affords within itself, if not a convincing proof that it was written in the third century, at least an almost unanswerable argument to show that it was written long before the middle of the fifth century. I refer to a passage already cited, and here again repeated—"Non mea verba sunt ista, sed Dei, et Apostolorum, atque Prophetarum qui nunquam mentiti sunt: quæ ego in Latinum transtuli."—"These are not my words, but the words of God, and of the Apostles and Prophets who never lied: *which I have translated into Latin.*" This is a very plain statement, about the meaning of which it is impossible to cavil. We learn from it that St. Patrick, in making quotations from the Holy Scriptures, was obliged to translate them from the Greek into the Latin, for the benefit of those to whom he was writing in the latter language. He was not, therefore, furnished with a Latin version of the Scriptures, and must have read them in the Greek, and translated them from that language. This fact is further proved, if any further proof were needed, by a reference to the quotations made from the Bible by him:\* they do not agree with, and are evidently not taken from, Jerome's translation of the Bible, which has always been the version approved of and authorized by the Church of Rome since the time of its completion by him, which was before the year 420. It is utterly impossible to reconcile this statement of the Saint with his supposed existence in the fifth century. If he lived at that period, and wrote this letter at any time after the year 450, it is perfectly incredible that he should not have had in his possession, or been able to procure a Latin copy of the Bible at least thirty years after Jerome had completed his revised edition of the various previously made and then existing Latin translations of the several books of both the Old and New Testament Scriptures. St. Patrick must have lived at a period in the history of the Church when a Greek Bible was more easily procurable than a Latin translation of it. That this was the case prior to the edict of Galerius, we can have no doubt. It is easy to understand that, during the first three centuries of our era, when it was a crime for any person living under the Roman government to be a member of the Christian Society, Latin copies of any portion of the Holy Scriptures, as being very rare, were very difficult to procure, and, as being dangerous documents to have in

\* See Appendix, C.

one's possession, were kept concealed, and guarded with jealous care. After the publication of the edict of Galerius, things must have entirely changed, and Latin translations, if not of the whole Bible, yet certainly of portions of it, must have increased in number, and become more easily attainable than Greek copies of it. We can scarcely conceive it to be possible that Patrick, a Roman youth, who laboured under such disadvantages with respect to his education, and circumstanced as he was, having lost six of the best years of his life, would have unnecessarily devoted several years to the study and acquisition of the Greek language, if he could have, by any means, procured a Latin translation of the Scriptures, and Roman teachers of them. The only inference which it is possible to draw from the statement contained in the above quotation is, that he lived at a time, and under circumstances, in which he found it impossible to procure a Latin translation of the Scriptures, and that he had recourse to the early Greek missionaries in Gaul, as the readiest, and, perhaps, the only means of qualifying himself for his proposed undertaking.

The fact that St. Patrick acquired his knowledge of the Holy Scriptures from some members of the Church established in Gaul by Greek missionaries, fixes, almost to an absolute certainty, the date at which he received his education in that country. The Gospel was first introduced into Gaul in the latter half of the second century by some Greek or Asiatic missionaries, of whom Pothinus was the chief.\* He succeeded in forming and establishing the church of Lyons and Vienne, of which he was the first bishop. He suffered martyrdom in the year 177, during a violent persecution of the Christians which took place in the South of Gaul in the reign of Marcus Aurelius. The celebrated Iræneus succeeded Pothinus in the bishoprick of Lyons, where he left behind him, at his death by martyrdom in A.D. 200, a well-established church. Now the first introduction of the Christian religion into Gaul by any Roman missionaries did not take place till A.D. 250. "Gregory of Tours states that in the reign of Decius seven missionaries set out from Rome for the conversion of Gaul, and that among them was Dionysius (afterwards) bishop of Paris."† As the Emperor Decius ascended the throne in the year 250, and reigned for but a short time, we will assume that the Roman mis-

\* History of the Christian Church by James Craigie Robertson, M.A., Canon of Canterbury.

† Ibid.



sionaries set out in that year: and we may reasonably conclude that they, within a few years, made some progress towards establishing a missionary settlement. It is, then, certain that a mission in connexion with the Church of Rome existed in Gaul shortly after the year 250. That Patrick, a youth of Roman lineage, as we have the strongest reasons for concluding that he was, should, if there were a Roman missionary settlement in Gaul at the time, have avoided those of his own nation, and sought for instruction in the Scriptures amongst Greek missionaries, is in the highest degree improbable, I should say, almost incredible, more especially as it appears that the Roman settlement was in the Northern, whilst the Greek was in the Southern part of Gaul, and, consequently, at much greater distance from Britain, where it is certain his family then resided. He must, therefore, have entered upon the study of the Greek language and of the Holy Scriptures in Gaul at some time before the year 250.

That St. Patrick flourished in the third century does not rest alone on the statements in, and the inferences which we draw from, his own writings; we have, fortunately, positive and direct evidence of the fact, and that in a source which is above suspicion of any partiality. In the work styled "*Legenda Aurea vulgo Historia Lombardica dicta*," published under the sanction of the Church of Rome, the article or chapter, "*De Sancto Patricio*," commences thus—"Patricius qui coepit circa annos Domini CCLXXX. dum Scottorum regi de Christi passione prædicaret, &c."—"Patrick who commenced (came into notice) about the year of our Lord CCLXXX., whilst he preached before a king of the Scots of the passion of Christ, &c." The author of the work in which this record is found, Jacobus A Voragine, was chief of the Dominican order of monks at Genoa, about A.D. 1298: and upwards of fifty editions of his book are said to have been published before the year 1600! so that the evidence contained in it comes from no concealed, and therefore doubtful, quarter. Neither can there be any doubt about the quarter whence the author obtained his information of the fact so stated by him. Columbanus, of whom mention has been already made in these pages, who had been educated at the great school of Beannchair (now Bangor in the County of Down), set out in the year 589 from Ireland, accompanied by twelve young men who had been students in the same school, and whom he had selected to assist in carrying out his project for the evan-

gelization of the Franks. He succeeded with their assistance in founding the celebrated Abbey and great school of Luxeuil in France, of which he was the first abbot. Columbanus and his companions carried with them the doctrine and discipline of the Irish Church, which they taught so successfully, that they soon aroused the jealousy of the Church of Rome, and they were finally, by the intrigues of the adherents of that Church, expelled by force from Luxeuil, in the year 610. He and his band of Irish missionaries being thus driven from France, were, at length, after moving from place to place for some time, most favourably received by Agilulf, King of the Lombards, who requested them to settle in his kingdom, promising them his protection. They accordingly selected a spot, and there, "in the year 613, was founded the famous monastery of Bobbio, which proved the peaceful home in which Columbanus passed the brief remainder of his days."\* Bobbio, thus founded by Columbanus, is just thirty English miles distant from Genoa, and there can be no doubt that it was from records in that monastery, as being almost in his immediate vicinity, that Jacobus A Voragine obtained his information as to the date at which St. Patrick lived. The certainty that records having reference to the church in Ireland were preserved and handed down in the monastery of Bobbio, as we might reasonably expect that they should, is proved to demonstration by the fact that the celebrated Antiphony of Bangor which is still preserved, and is now in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, was discovered in it.† It is a fortunate circumstance in the interests of truth, that the work of the chief of the Dominican order of monks at Genoa in Italy was beyond the reach of the barbarian destroyers of Irish records.

The fact that St. Patrick flourished in the latter part of the third, and in the beginning of the fourth, century, receives most remarkable confirmation from the poems of Oisín, or Ossian, as he is more generally called—the warrior-poet—son of Finn MacCumhal (pronounced MacCooal), the celebrated Scottish or Irish hero, whose name MacPherson translated into Fingal. Finn MacCumhal was son-in-law of King Cormac Ulfada, and was the chief leader or general of a small standing army, or regularly embodied and well-disciplined militia, a force which our Irish kings had organised after

\* Annotations on Dr. D'Aubigne's Sketch of the Early British Church, by M. Webb.

† See *The Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, edited by Robert MacAdam, Esq., vol. i., p. 168.

the model of the Roman legions then in Britain: he was slain at a very advanced age, in the year 283. Oisín, his son, survived him, and though the date of his death is uncertain, it probably took place early in the fourth century. The writer is well aware that the fact of Oisín having been a real personage has been warmly disputed. This is not a proper place to enter into any lengthened disquisition upon the question, but the writer may be permitted to observe that it appears to him that there is a far greater amount of evidence to prove the reality of his existence, and that he was the author of the poems ascribed to him, than there is to prove the personality of very many historical characters whose existence has never been questioned. The poems of Oisín have been preserved and handed down to us under very extraordinary and most peculiar circumstances. They were originally composed and written in the Celtic tongue, a language which has been gradually, from century to century, becoming more and more circumscribed in its limits, a process which commenced very shortly after the time in which he lived. The only people speaking the language in which Oisín wrote have been undergoing a similar process, and have been for centuries confined to Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland, where they were, partly from their geographical position, and partly from their outward circumstances and habits of life, almost entirely isolated from the rest of the world. The very peculiar circumstances under which the poems of Oisín have been composed and preserved amongst a people so isolated as the Scots or Gael of Ireland and the Highlands of North Britain, and in a language wholly unknown, not only to the rest of the world, but even to the learned, and of which the great majority of their own countrymen inhabiting those islands were wholly ignorant, accounts most satisfactorily for their having been confined for such a length of time exclusively to those peoples. And as Irish history had been, for the same reasons, until very lately, a sealed book to the learned, they, being unacquainted with the language in which it was written, and unwilling to confess their ignorance, refused to acknowledge the authenticity of those writings produced by the Irish in support of their just claims to ancient civilization and learning, so, in like manner, many of the learned in the days of MacPherson refused to give credit to the existence of Oisín as a real personage, because they were wholly ignorant of the Celtic or Gaelic language and history, and being unwilling to confess their ignorance, they chose rather to treat Oisín

as a fictitious personage, than honestly to acknowledge their own ignorance of that language, history, and literature. Wholly ignorant of Gaelic or Celtic history, and having, consequently, never heard of Oisín, the warrior-bard, and either trying to conceal their want of knowledge of it, or being so greatly prejudiced, or so extremely opinionative, that they made no endeavour to obtain it, they made a still more extraordinary display of their egregious folly and ignorance in an attempt to force the authorship of the poems on the translator, MacPherson, although he very honestly and honourably disclaimed it! Since the world began, has ever such poetry as that of Oisín been written by one man, and been by him ascribed to another?

The great beauty, grandeur, and fascinating qualities of the poems of Oisín were used as an argument to prove his unreality!!! The fact that his poems, possessing such fascination, had been handed down from bard to bard, and in songs from father to son, for 1500 years, a testimony to the beauty and innate worth and attraction of the poetry such as no other poet has ever received, and the fact of their having been so handed down, and having been sung by generation after generation, changing their language or idiom with every succeeding change which has been made in this, as in every other spoken language, was overlooked!—and the fact that they were recited and sung by the Highlanders, in the language now spoken by them—and, having been so collected by MacPherson, were, by him, presented to the public in that language—was used by many as an argument in an attempt to prove that they were of recent origin! If the poems of Homer had been confined to the Greeks, and depending on them solely for transmission to us, and supposing that every succeeding generation of the Greeks (alas! that we have to speak hypothetically,) had been capable of duly appreciating their merits, in what form of the language might we now expect to find them?

I may here quote, as a specimen of the arguments used against the authenticity of the poems of Oisín, two extracts from the learned Edward O'Reilly's Chronological Account of Irish Writers, published in the Transactions of the Ibero-Celtic Society. In his article on King Cormac Ulfada, he says:—"It may not, perhaps, be improper to observe that Cormac was the father-in-law of the famous Fionn Mac Cubhail, General of the *Fianna Eirionn*, and father of Oisín the poet; and, consequently, if the genuine poems of Oisín were

extant, their language would be the same as that of Cormac's works, which are nearly unintelligible to the generality of Irish readers, and completely so to the vulgar. The language of those poems which the Highland Society have given to the world as the originals of Oisín, is the living language of the Highlanders of the present day; and if properly spelled and read by an Irish scholar, would be intelligible to the most illiterate peasant in Ireland. A comparison of the languages of Cormac and the *Scotch* Oisín, might probably go far towards ascertaining the period in which the Highland bard was born." And in his article on Oisín, he says:—"Oisín, the Son of Fionn Mac Cubhail, so much celebrated for his poetic genius, survived the battle of *Gabhra Aiche*, near Tarah, fought this year (A.D. 284), in which his son Oscar and the principal part of the Fenian heroes lost their lives. Many beautiful poems are extant that bear the name of Oisín, but there are no good reasons to suppose that they are the genuine compositions of that bard. If ever they were composed by Oisín, they have since suffered a wonderful change in their language, and have been interpolated, so as to make the poet and Saint Patrick contemporaries, though the latter did not commence his apostolic labours in Ireland until the middle of the fifth century, when, by the course of nature, Oisín must have lain in his grave about one hundred and fifty years." These remarks of O'Reilly do certainly convey to us the idea of his truthfulness and impartiality in recording mere facts, but are not calculated to impress us with a deep sense of his judgment and discrimination. The writings of King Cormac and the poems of Oisín are so very dissimilar in their nature and objects, and the subject matter of each so widely different, that we cannot reasonably expect them to be governed by the same laws, or to find them similarly circumstanced in almost any respect. The former were treatises on law, government, and morals, and, though very valuable in themselves, were confined to a few readers, and we therefore now find them exactly as King Cormac wrote them. The latter were, on the contrary, poems or songs in popular and general use, and may be compared to some article or implement, which having been in long and constant use, has by tear and wear, and repeated repairs, almost lost its identity, containing perhaps very little of the actual material of which it was originally composed; and they have, consequently, undergone many changes, so that we now find them, not only in a language different from that in which Oisín wrote them, but also, as there are good reasons

to believe, altered in many other respects. These changes in them, as a matter of course, we might certainly expect to find. It would be not only wonderful, but absolutely miraculous, if these poems had been handed down, as they have been, for so many centuries without undergoing many changes. How many versions of the much-admired ballad of "Chevy Chase," and of many other very popular poems of the same class, do we find? How many versions are there of, and changes in, the common ballad of the "Battle of the Boyne," written only 170 years ago, and protected, too, by the printing press? In fine, how many various readings of, and changes in, numerous passages in the works of many of even the most eminent of our poets of the few past centuries do we find? The argument that these poems were not the productions of the genius of Oisín, because they have, in their transmission to us, through a space of sixteen hundred years, "suffered a wonderful change in their language," is not only futile, but is positively childish!

O'Reilly's argument is, in other respects, most inconclusive; his sole reason for disputing the authenticity of the poems of Oisín is founded on the fact that they are now found, not in the written language of the third century, but in that now spoken. The facts, as stated by him, do not warrant him in coming to any such conclusion. He records Oisín amongst acknowledged Irish writers, as "so celebrated for his poetic genius;" he acknowledges that "many beautiful poems are extant that bear his name." Upon these premises, and with no other facts in evidence before us, the only conclusion to which we are warranted in coming, is, that these poems are the genuine works of Oisín. What, then, is the evidence produced by O'Reilly against their authenticity? Because "they have suffered a wonderful change in their language" he condemns them! Because they were "beautiful," and possessed of such innate charms, and because their beauties and attractions were, therefore, duly appreciated by every successive generation of his countrymen, to their immortal honour, and because, forsooth, they are therefore found in the language now spoken by them, they are not the genuine productions of Oisín! If O'Reilly, and those who agree in opinion with him, had found some worthless rhymes, written in the language of the *Senchus Mór*, they would have hailed them as the undoubted productions of Oisín; but, because the beauty and inherent worth of these poems have

rendered them so popular with all generations of the Irish and the Gael, they are, therefore, the fictitious productions of some anonymous writer !

It is necessary to notice here another,—and as coming from the pen of a writer so celebrated—a very extraordinary specimen of critical remark on the poems of Oisín, which is found in the writings of the very learned historian Gibbon: in his “Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,” vol. i., chap. vi., there occurs the following passage:—“This Caledonian war, neither marked by decisive events nor attended with any important consequences, would ill deserve our attention; but it is supposed, not without a considerable degree of probability, that the invasion of Severus is connected with the most shining period of the British history or fable. Fingal, whose fame, with that of his heroes and bards, has been revived in our language by a recent publication, is said to have commanded the Caledonians in that memorable juncture, to have eluded the power of Severus, and to have obtained a signal victory on the banks of the Carun, in which the son of *the King of the World*, Caracul, fled from his arms along the fields of his pride. Something of a doubtful mist still hangs over these Highland traditions; nor can it be entirely dispelled by the most ingenious researches of modern criticism; but if we could, with safety, indulge the pleasing supposition that Fingal lived, and that Ossian sung, the striking contrast of the situation and manners of the contending nations might amuse a philosophic mind. The parallel would be little to the advantage of the more civilised people if we compared the unrelenting revenge of Severus with the generous clemency of Fingal; the timid and brutal cruelty of Caracalla, with the bravery, the tenderness, the elegant genius of Ossian; the mercenary chiefs who, from motives of fear or interest, served under the Imperial standard, with the free-born warriors who started to arms at the voice of the King of Morven; if, in a word, we contemplated the untutored Caledonians, glowing with the warm virtues of nature, and the degenerate Romans, polluted with the mean vices of wealth and slavery.” And in a note on this text he writes:—“That the Caracul of Ossian is the Caracalla of the Roman History, is, perhaps, the only point of British antiquity in which Mr. Macpherson and Mr. Whitaker are of the same opinion; and yet the opinion is not without difficulty. In the Caledonian war, the son of Severus was known only by the appellation of Antoninus; and it may seem

strange that the Highland bard should describe him by a nick-name invented four years afterwards, scarcely used by the Romans till after the death of that Emperor, and seldom employed by the most ancient historians." Gibbon was, evidently, notwithstanding his great literary attainments and classical learning, quite ignorant of the Gaelic or Irish language and history: and the remarks made by him in the text on the poetry of Ossian, and the age in which he lived, are written with all the caution of a person who knew little or nothing of that history, and might, consequently, have passed without much notice; but the covert attack made in the note, which discloses one of the most extraordinary blunders ever made by any writer, cannot be allowed to pass without comment. His ignorance of the Irish language and history, and the doubt and uncertainty created in his mind thereby, appear to have quite bewildered his intellect. He sneeringly remarks that "it may seem strange that the Highland bard should describe him by a nick-name invented four years afterwards, scarcely used by the Romans till after the death of that Emperor." He thus gravely, yet most stupidly, assumes that that particular poem of Ossian, in which Caracul or Caracalla is mentioned, must, or could only, if it were the genuine work of that bard, have been written immediately after the battle on the banks of the Carun, and before Caracalla had acquired that nick-name; whereas, it must be apparent to every one, that any person, wholly ignorant of every thing connected with the history, except the fact that Fingal, the *father* of Ossian, was said to have led his warriors to that battle; and with the poem itself before him in which Fingal is twice spoken of as being then a "youth,"—*might* assume that Ossian, the writer of the poem, was yet unborn; and *must* assume, that, if born, he was then a mere child, and that, consequently, that poem *could not* have been written shortly after the fight on the banks of the Carun, but *must* have been written long after the death of the Emperor Caracalla, an event which took place about six years after that battle. Gibbon, very inconsiderately, made this most groundless assumption, leaving it to be thence inferred that, because Caracalla did not bear that name at the time in which the scene of the dramatic poem, in which he was so named, was laid, that, therefore, there is a "difficulty" in forming an opinion upon, what he is pleased to call, "these Highland traditions." The "difficulty" appears to have been created by his own very remarkable confusion of ideas on this subject.



Even supposing, for the sake of argument, that Ossian had arrived at years of maturity in A.D. 211, the year in which the battle of Carun is said to have been fought, by what extraordinary mental process did Gibbon arrive at the conclusion that Ossian was confined to the five or six following years for the writing of this poem, and that it only could, or should, or ought to have been written immediately after the events alluded to in it took place? or that there is anything "strange" in the circumstance that it was composed five years, or perhaps fifty years, as it probably was, afterwards?

Any doubts as to the existence of Oisín, and as to the authenticity of the poems which "bear his name," must be removed, if we take into consideration, and estimate at its just weight, the fact that they have been handed down, not by the Irish alone, but also by the Gael or Highlanders of North Britain, two peoples who have been for very many centuries so separate and distinct, and between whom there has been so little intercourse, that it is quite impossible even to imagine that any collusion could have existed between them on such a subject. The fact that these poems have been handed down from bard to bard, both in Ireland and in the Highlands of Scotland, each people claiming both the poet and his poems as of native origin, also proves that they must have been written at a time when the Scots of Alba and the Scots of Ireland were one and the same people, or whilst the former existed as a colony, and as such, was so closely and intimately connected, and as needing assistance and support, kept up such a constant intercourse with the parent country, so as to constitute them both still one and the same people. Now, it is certain that the Scots of Alba had emerged from the condition of a colony before the beginning of the fifth century, as Bede, speaking of the irruptions of the Scots and Picts into South Britain (although it is evident that in the term Scots he included both those of Ireland and of North Britain), calls them (*gens*) a nation seated in the island of Britain: and as in thus mentioning them in conjunction with the Picts, he gives them precedence, he must have considered them to have been at that date the more important nation. We may, therefore, conclude that the Scots of Alba had, some time prior to the commencement of the fifth century, assumed to themselves a distinct nationality, and considered themselves to be, and were regarded by their neighbours as, an independent people. Upon these premises, we can come to no other conclusion

than that the poems of Oisín were written some time before that period; and when we find that Irish history produces evidence, from an opposite quarter, of the fact that Oisín flourished in the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth century, fully and exactly corroborating the evidence afforded by the Highland traditions, and our inductions therefrom, we, therefore, have no reason whatever to doubt the fact that Oisín lived at that time, and that he was the author of the poems that "bear his name."

The poems of Oisín here more particularly referred to in connexion with the subject of these pages, are composed in the form of dialogues between the poet and St. Patrick. Although it is certain that they have existed and been handed down for ages in Ireland as the works of Oisín, whilst there never has been, at any time, any other person even suggested as the author of them, still it might be within the bounds of possibility to adduce some reasons which might lead us at least to doubt their authenticity; but when we find similar poems to have existed time out of mind in the Highlands of Scotland, it leaves it utterly impossible that there should be any reasonable doubt that they are the genuine work of the poet Oisín. If these poems, then, were composed by Oisín, the date of whose existence, as given in Irish history, has never been disputed, the question as to the time at which St. Patrick lived is effectually disposed of, and conclusively determined.





## APPENDIX A.

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### SANCTI PATRICII CONFESSIO, SIVE EPISTOLA AD HIBERNOS.

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(Ex codice Cottoniano annorum saltem 800, collato cum Ardmachano annorum mille.)

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**E**GO Patricius peccator, rusticissimus et minimus omnium fidelium, et contemptibilissimus apud plurimos, patrem habui Calpornium Diaconum, filium quondam Potiti Presbyteri,\* qui fuit in vico Banavan Taberniæ. Villulam enim prope habuit, ubi capturam dedi. Annorum eram tum fere xvi. Deum verum ignorabam, et Hiberione in captivitate adductus sum, cum tot milibus hominum, secundum merita nostra, quia a Deo recessimus, et præcepta ejus non custodivimus, et sacerdotibus nostris inobedientes fuimus, qui nostram salutem admonebant: et Dominus

\* "Presbyteri." This word has been interpolated. It is evident that some change has been made at this place. The sentence reads in the Salisbury copy as it does here; but in the Book of Armagh it reads:—"Patrem habui Calpornium Diaconum, filium quondam Potiti Presbyteri, filii Odissi, qui fuit, &c." In the original penned by St. Patrick, as the writer believes, it stood thus:—"Patrem habui Calpornium Decurionem, filium quondam Potiti, filii Odissi, qui fuit, etc." After the word "Diaconum" had crept into the copies of the original writing, either by mistake or design, in the place of "Decurionem," it was, no doubt, thought advisable to give the Saint a finer ecclesiastical pedigree, and accordingly the words "filii Odissi" were erased, and the word "Presbyteri" substituted; and the scribe who made the copy preserved in the Book of Armagh, having access to more than one version of the Confession, inserted both "Presbyteri" and "filii Odissi." As it may appear strange that St. Patrick should give here the names of his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, it is necessary to mention that it was a common Irish custom, and one which the Saint had, no doubt, learned during his long residence in Ireland.

induxit super nos iram animationis suæ, et dispersit nos in gentibus multis, etiam usque ad ultimum terræ, ubi nunc parvitas mea esse videtur inter alienigenas. Et ibi Dominus apperuit sensum incredulitatis meæ, ut vel sero rememorarem delicta mea, et ut converterer toto corde ad Dominum Deum meum; qui respexit humilitatem meam, et misertus est adolescentiæ et ignorantiae meæ, et custodivit me antequam saperem vel distinguerem inter bonum et malum, et munivit me, et consolatus est me, ut pater filium.

Unde autem tacere non possum, neque expedit quidem tanta beneficia, et tantam gratiam, quam mihi (Dominus præstare) dignatus est in terra captivitatis meæ, quia hæc est retributio nostra, ut post correptionem ad agnitionem Dñi exaltaremur, et confiteremur mirabilia ejus coram omni natione quæ est sub omni cœlo, quia non est alius Deus, nec unquam fuit nec erit post hunc, præter Deum Patrem ingenitum, sine principio, a quo est omne principium, omnia tenentem (ut diximus), et hujus filium Jesum Christum, quem cum Patre scilicet fuisse semper testamur, ante originem seculi, spiritualiter apud Patrem, inenarrabiliter genitum ante omne principium, et per ipsum facta sunt visibilia et invisibilia, hominem factum, devicta morte, in cœlos ad Patrem receptum. Et dedit illi omnem potestatem super omne nomen, cœlestium et terrestrium et infernorum, ut omnis lingua confiteatur, quia Dominus et Deus est Jesus Christus, quem credimus, et expectamus adventum ipsius, mox futurus Judex vivorum et mortuorum, qui reddet unicuique secundum facta sua, et infudit in nobis abunde Spiritus Sancti donum, et pignus immortalitatis, qui facit credentes et obedientes, ut sint filii Dei Patris, et cohæredes Christi, quem confitemur et adoramus, unum Deum in Trinitate sacri nominis. Ipse enim dixit per Prophetam :—"Invoca me in die tribulationis tuæ, et liberabo te, et magnificabis me." Et iterum inquit, "Opera autem Dei revelare et confiteri honorificum est." Tamen etsi in multis imperfectus sum, opto fratres et cognatos meos scire qualitatem meam, ut possint perspicere votum animæ meæ. Non ignoro testimonium Domini mei, qui in Psalmo testatur, "Perdes eos qui loquuntur mendacium," et iterum, "Os quod mentitur occidit animam." Et idem Dominus in Evangelio inquit, "Verbum otiosum quod locuti fuerint homines, reddent pro eo rationem in die judicii." Unde autem vehementer (debueram) cum timore et tremore, metuere hanc sententiam in die illa, ubi nemo poterit se subtrahere vel abscondere, sed omnes omnino

reddituri sumus rationem etiam minimorum peccatorum ante tribunal Christi Domini.

Quapropter olim cogitavi scribere, sed usque nunc hæsitavi. Timui enim ne inciderem in linguam hominum. Et qui non legi, sicut cæteri qui optime, itaque jure, et sacras literas utroque pari modo combiberunt, et sermonem illorum ex infantia nunquam mutaverunt, sed magis ad perfectum semper addiderunt. Nam sermo et loquela nostra translata est in linguam alienam, sicut facile potest probari ex saliva scripturæ meæ, qualiter sum ego in sermonibus instructus atque eruditus, quia inquit Sapiens, "per linguam dignoscitur et sensus et scientia et doctrina varietatis." Sed quid prodest excusatio juxta veritatem, præsertim cum præsumptione? quatinus modo ipse appeto in senectute mea, quod in juventute, quia obstiterunt (peccata mea) ut confirmarem quod ante non perlegeram. Sed quis me credit? Et si dixerò (quod ante præfatus sum) adulescens, immo pene puer imberbis, capturam dedi, antequam scirem quid peterem, vel quid vitare debueram. Unde ergo hodie erubesco, et vehementer pertimeo denudare imperitiam meam, quia disertis brevitate sermonis explicare nequeo. Sicut enim Spiritus gestit, et animus et sensus monstrat affectus. Sed si itaque datum mihi fuisset sicut cæteris, veruntamen non silerem propter retributionem. Etsi forte videtur apud aliquantos, me in hoc præponere cum mea inscitia et tardiori lingua. Sed scriptum est, "Linguae balbutientes velociter discent loqui pacem:" quanto magis nos adpetere debemus qui sumus, inquit, "Epistola Christi," in salute usque ad ultimum terræ: etsi non diserta, sed rata et fortissime scripta in cordibus vestris, "non atramento, sed Spiritu Dei vivi." Et iterum Spiritus testatur, "Et rusticatio ab Altissimo creata est."

Unde ego primus rusticus perfuga, indoctus scilicet, qui nescio in posterum providere: sed scio illud certissime, quia utique priusquam humiliarer, ego eram velut lapis qui jacet in luto profundo, et venit qui potens est, et in sua misericordia sustulit me, et quidem scilicet sursum adlevavit, et collocavit me in summo pariete, et inde fortiter debueram exclamare, ad retribuendum quoque aliquid Domino, pro tantis beneficiis ejus, hic et in æternum, quæ mens hominum æstimare non potest. Unde antem admiramini magni et pusilli qui timetis Deum, et vos ignari Domini Rhetorici, ex Gallicis. Audite ergo et scrutamini, quis me stultum excitavit de medio eorum, qui videntur sapientes esse et legis periti, et potentes



in sermone, et in omni re, et me quidem detestabilem hujus mundi, præ cæteris inspiravit si talis essem. Dummodo autem ut cum metu et reverentia, et sine querela fideliter prodessem Genti, ad quam charitas Christi transtulit, et donavit me in vita mea, si dignus fuero: denique, ut cum humilitate et veraciter deservirem illis.

In mensura itaque fidei Trinitatis, oportet distinguere sine reprehensione periculi, notum facere donum Dei et consolationem æternam, sine timore fidutialiter Dei nomen (nomine) ubique expandere, ut etiam post obitum meum Gallicis relinquerem fratribus, et filiis meis, quos ego in Domino baptizavi, tot milia hominum. Et non eram dignus neque talis, ut hoc Dominus servulo suo concederet, post ærumnas et tantas moles, post captivitatem, post annos multos, in gentem illam tantam gratiam mihi donaret, quod ego aliquando in juventute mea, nunquam speravi neque cogitavi.

Sed postquam Hiberionem deveneram, quotidie (igitur) pecora pascabam, et frequens in die orabam, magis ac magis accedebat amor Dei, et timor ipsius, et fides augebatur, et spiritus augebatur, ut in die una usque ad centum orationes, et in nocte prope similiter; ut etiam in silvis et monte manebam, et ante lucem excitabar ad orationem per nivem, per gelu, per pluviam, et nihil mali sentiebam, neque ulla pigritia erat in me, sicut modo video, quia tunc in me Spiritus fervebat.

Et ibi scilicet quadam nocte, in somno audiui vocem dicentem mihi, "Bene jejunas, cito iturus ad patriam tuam." Et iterum post paululum tempus, audiui responsum dicens mihi, "ecce navis tua parata est;" et non erat prope, sed forte habebat ducenta milia passus: et ibi nunquam fueram, nec ibi notum quenquam de hominibus habebam. Et deinde postmodum conversus sum in fugam, et intermisi hominem cum quo fueram sex annis. Et veni in virtute Domini, qui viam meam ad bonum dirigebat, et nihil metuebam donec perveni ad navem illam. Et illa die qua perveni, profecta est navis de loco suo, et locutus sum ut haberem unde navigarem cum illis. Et gubernatori displicuit, et acriter cum indignatione respondit, —"Nequaquam tu nobiscum adpetas ire." Et cum hæc audissem, separavi me ab illis, ut venirem ad tuguriolum ubi hospitabam; et in itinere cœpi orare, et antequam orationem consummarem, audiui unum ex illis fortiter exclamantem post me; "Veni cito, quia vocant te homines isti," et statim ad illos reversus sum, et cœperunt mihi dicere, "veni quia ex fide recipimus te, fac nobiscum amicitiam,

quomodo vuleris." Et in illa die itaque repuli fugere, propter timorem Dei. Veruntamen speravi ab illis, ut mihi dicerent, "veni in fide Jesu Christi," quia Gentes erant.

Et hoc obtinui cum illis, (et protinus navigavimus); et post triduum terram cepimus, et viginti octo dies per desertum iter fecimus, et cibus defuit illis, et fames invaluit super eos. Et alia die cœpit gubernator mihi dicere, "Quid Christiane dicis? Deus tuus magnus et omnipotens est; quare ergo non potes pro nobis orare, quia nos fame periclitamur? difficile est enim ut aliquem hominem unquam videamus." Ego enim evidenter dixi illis, "convertimini ex fide, et ex toto corde, ad Dominum Deum nostrum, quia nihil est illi impossibile, ut hodie cibum mittat vobis, in viam vestram, usque dum satiamini, quia ubique abundat illi." Et adjuvante Deo, ita factum est: ecce grex porcorum in via ante oculos nostros apparuit: et multos ex illis interfecerunt, et ibi duas noctes manserunt bene refecti; et carne eorum relevati sunt, quia multi ex illis defecerunt, et secus viam semivivi derelicti sunt. Et post hæc summas gratias egerunt Deo, et ego honorificatus sum sub oculis eorum. (Et ex hac die abundanter cibum habuerunt). Etiam mel silvestre invenerunt, et mihi partem obtulerunt. Et unus ex illis dixit, "hoc immolatiuum est: Deo gratias." Exinde nihil gustavi. Eadem vero nocte eram dormiens, et fortiter temptavit me Satanas, cujus memor ero quamdiu fuero in hoc corpore. Et cecidit super me veluti saxum ingens, et nihil membrorum meorum prævalens. Sed unde mihi venit, ignoro, in spiritum, ut Heliam vocarem: et inter hæc vidi in cœlo Solem oriri, et dum clamarem, "Heliam, Heliam," viribus meis, ecce splendor Solis decedit super me, et statim discussit a me omnem gravitudinem. Et credo quod a Christo Domino meo (subventus sum, et Spiritus ejus jam tunc) clamabat pro me, et spero quod sic erit in die pressuræ meæ, sicut in Evangelio inquit; (In illa die) Dominus (testatur) "Non vos estis qui loquimini, sed Spiritus Patris vestri qui loquitur in vobis."

Et iterum post annos non multos, adhuc capturam dedi; ea nocte prima itaque mansi cum illis, responsum autem divinum audivi dicens mihi, "Duos menses eris cum illis," quod ita factum est. Nocte illa sexagesima liberavit me Dominus de manibus eorum. Ecce in itinere prævidit nobis cibum et ignem, et siccitatem quotidie: donec quarto decimo die pervenimus ad homines, sicut superius insinuavi, viginti et octo dies per desertum iter

fecimus, et ea nocte qua pervenimus ad homines, de cibo vero nihil habuimus.

Et iterum post paucos annos in Britanniiis eram cum parentibus meis, qui me ut filium susceperunt, et ex fide rogaverunt me, ut vel modo ego (post tantas tribulationes quas pertuli) nunquam ab illis discederem. Et ibi scilicet, vidi in visu, nocte, virum venientem quasi de Hiberione, cui nomen Victoricius, cum epistulis innumerabilibus, et dedit mihi unam ex illis, et legi principium epistolæ continentem "*Vox Hiberionacum.*" Et dum recitabam principium epistolæ, putabam ipso momento, audire vocem ipsorum qui erant juxta sylvam Focluti, quæ est prope mare occidentale. Et sic exclamaverunt quasi ex uno ore; "*Rogamus te sancte puer, ut venias et adhuc ambules inter nos.*" Et valde compunctus sum corde, et amplius non potui legere: et sic expergefactus sum. Deo gratias, quia post annos plurimos præstitit illis Dominus, secundum clamorem eorum. Et alia nocte, nescio, Deus scit, utrum in me, an juxta me, verbis peritissimis, quæ ego audivi et non potui intelligere, nisi ad postremum orationis sic affatus est; "*qui pro te animam suam posuit.*" Et sic expergefactus sum gaudibundus. Et iterum vidi in me ipsum orantem, et eram quasi intra corpus meum: et audivi super me, hoc est, super interiore hominem, et ibi fortiter orabat gemitibus. Et inter hæc stupebam, et admirabar, et cogitabam quis esset qui in me orabat. Sed ad postremum orationis, sic effatus est, ut sit Spiritus. Et sic expectatus sum, et recordatus sum, Apostolo dicente; "*Spiritus adjuvat infirmitatem nostræ orationis. Nam quid oremus sicut oportet nescimus, sed ipse Spiritus postulat pro nobis gemitibus inenarrabilibus, quæ verbis exprimi non possunt.*" Et iterum, "*Dominus advocatus noster postulat pro nobis.*"

Et quando temptatus sum ab aliquantis senioribus meis qui venerunt, et peccata mea contra laboriosum episcopatum meum: utique in illo die fortiter impulsus sum ut caderem hic et in æternum. Sed Dominus pepercit proselito et peregrino, propter nomen suum benigne et valde mihi subvenit, in hac conculcatione, quod in labem et in obprobrium non male deveni. Deum oro ut non illis in peccatum reputetur occasionum. Post annos triginta\* invenerunt me, et adversus verbum quod confessus fueram, antequam essem Diaconus, propter anxietatem, mœsto animo insinuavi

\* It appears plain from the statement here made by the Saint, that he was about forty-five years of age when he was ordained a bishop.



amicissimo meo, quæ in pueritia mea una die gesseram, immo in una hora, quia nec dum prævalebam. Nescio, Deus scit, si habeam tunc annos quindecim, et Deum vivum non credebam, neque ex infantia mea, sed in morte et in incredulitate mansi, donec valde castigatus sum, et in veritate humiliatus sum a fame et nuditate, et quotidie. Contra, Hiberionem non sponte pergebam, donec prope deficiebam. Sed hoc potius bene mihi fuit, quia ex hoc emendatus sum a Domino, et aptavit me ut hodie essem quod aliquando longe a me erat, ut ego curas haberem, aut sagaterem pro salute aliorum; quando tunc etiam de me ipso non cogitabam.

Igitur in illo die quo reprobatus sum a memoratis supra dictis, ad noctem illam vidi in visu noctis; scriptum erat contra faciem meam sine honore. Et inter hæc, audiivi responsum (divinum) dicens mihi: "male vidimus faciem Dei signati\* nudato nomine," nec sic prædixit, male vidisti, sed male vidimus, quasi ibi se junxit, sicut dixit; "Qui vos tangit, quasi tangit pupillam oculi mei." Idcirco gratias ago ei qui me in omnibus confortavit, ut non me impediret a protectione quam statueram, et de meo quoque opere quod a Christo didiceram. Sed magis ex eo sensi in me virtutem non parvam, et fides mea probata est coram Deo et hominibus. Unde autem audenter dico: non me reprehendit conscientia mea hic et in futurum.

Testem Deum habeo, quia non sum mentitus in sermonibus quos ego retuli vobis. Sed magis doleo pro amicissimo meo, cur hoc meruimus audire tale responsum, cui ego credidi etiam animam. Et comperi ab aliquantis fratribus, ante defensionem illam, quod ego non interfui, nec in Britanniiis eram, nec a me orietur, ut et ille in mea absentia, pro me pulsaret, etiam mihi ipse ore suo dixerat: ecce dandus es tu ad gradum Episcopatus, quod non eram dignus. Sed unde venit illi postmodum, ut coram cunctis bonis, et malis, et me publice dehonestaret, quod ante sponte et lætus indulserat? Et Dominus qui major omnibus est, satis dico. Sed tamen non debeo abscondere donum Dei, quod largitus est nobis in terra captivitatis meæ. Quia tunc fortiter inquisivi eum, et ibi inveni illum, et servavit me ab omnibus iniquitatibus. Sic credo, propter inhabitantem Spiritum ejus, qui operatus est usque in hanc diem in me audenter rursus. Sed scit Deus, si mihi homo effatus fuisset, forsitan tacuissem, propter charitatem Christi.

\* "Dei signati."—This is nonsense. The Salisbury copy gives it correctly "Designati."

Unde ergo indefessam gratiam agam Deo meo, qui me fidele servavit in die temptationis meæ, ita ut hodie confidentur offeram illi sacrificium, ut hostiam viventem, animam meam Christo Domino meo, qui me servavit ab omnibus angustiis meis : ut et dicam “ quis ego sum, Domine, vel quæ est vocatio mea, qui mihi tantam divinitatem cooperuisti ? ” ita ut hodie in gentibus constanter exultarem, et magnificarem nomen tuum, ubicunque fuero ; necnon in secundis, sed etiam in pressuris : ut quicquid mihi evenirit, sive bonum sive malum, æqualiter debeo suscipere, et Deo gratias semper agere, qui mihi ostendit ut indubitabilem eum sine fine crederem, et qui me audierit, ut et ego inscius sim in novissimis diebus, hoc opus tam pium et tam mirificum adire aggrederer, ita ut imitarer quospiam illos, quos ante Dominus jam olim prædixerat prænunciaturum Evangelium suum, “ in testimonium omnibus gentibus, ante finem mundi. ” Quod ita ergo (ut vidimus itaque) suppletum est. Ecce testes sumus, quia Evangelium prædicatum est usque ubi nemo ultra est.

Longum est autem totum per singula enarrare laborem meum, vel per partes. Breviter dicam qualiter piissimus Deus de servitute sæpe liberavit, ex duodecim periculis, quibus periclitata est anima mea, præter insidias multas, et quæ verbis exprimere non valeo : nec et injuriam legentibus faciam. Sed dum authorem habeo, qui novit omnia, etiam antequam fiant, ut me pauperculum pupillum. Ideo tamen responsum divinum creberrime admonuit, unde mihi hæc sapientia quæ in me non erat, qui nec numerum dierum noveram, neque Deum sapiebam : unde mihi postmodum donum tam magnum, tam salubre, Deum agnoscere, vel diligere : sed ut patriam et parentes amitterem ; et munera multa mihi offerebantur cum fletu et lachrymis, et offendi illos, necnon contra votum, aliquantis de senioribus meis. Sed, gubernante Deo, nullo modo consensi, neque adqueivi illis, non mea gratia, sed Deus qui vicit in me, et restitit illis omnibus, ut ego venirem ad Hibernas gentes Evangelium prædicare, et ab incredulis contumelias preferre, ut haurirem obprobrium peregrinationis meæ, et persecutiones multas, usque ad vincula, et ut darem ingenuitatem meam pro utilitate aliorum ; et si dignus fuero, promptus sum ut etiam animam meam incunctanter et libentissime pro nomine ejus : et ibi opto impendere eam, usque ad mortem, si Dominus mihi indulget. Quia valde debitor sum Deo qui mihi tantam gratiam donavit, ut populi multi per me in Deum renascerentur, et postmodum con-

summarentur. Et ut clerici ubique illis ordinarentur ad plebem nuper venientem ad credulitatem, quam sumpsit Dominus ab extremis terræ, sicut olim promiserat per Prophetas. "Ad te gentes venient ab extremis terræ et dicent, sicut falsa comparaverunt patres nostri idola, et non est utilitas in eis." Et iterum, "Posui te lumen in Gentibus, ut sis in salutem usque ad extremum terræ." Et ibi volo expectare promissum ipsius, qui utique nunquam fallit, sicut in Evangelio pollicetur. "Venient ab oriente et occidente (et) recumbent cum Abraham, et Isaac, et Jacob:" sicut credimus ab omni mundo venturi sunt credentes.

Idcirco oportet bene et diligenter piscari, sicut Dominus præmonet, dicens; "Venite post me et faciam vos fieri piscatores hominum." Et iterum dicit per Prophetas, "Ecce ego mitto piscatores et venatores multos, dicit Dominus, &c." Unde autem valde oportebat retia nostra tendere, ita ut multitudo copiosa et turba Deo caperetur, ut ubique essent Clerici qui baptizarent et exhortarentur populum indigentem et desiderantem, sicut Dominus in Evangelio admonet et docet, dicens; "Euntes ergo docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti, docentes eos observare omnia quæcunque mandavi vobis: et ecce Ego vobiscum sum omnibus diebus, usque ad consummationem seculi." Et iterum dicit, "Euntes ergo in mundum universum prædicate Evangelium omni creaturæ. Qui crediderit et baptizatus fuerit salvus erit. Qui vero non crediderit condemnabitur." Et iterum; "Prædicabitur hoc Evangelium regni in universo mundo, in testimonium omnibus gentibus, et tunc veniet finis." Et item Dominus per Prophetam prænuncians, inquit; "et erit in novissimis diebus, dicit Dominus, effundam de Spiritu meo super omnem carnem, et prophetabunt filii vestri et filiae vestrae, et filii vestri visiones videbunt, et seniores vestri somnia somniabunt. Et quidem super servos meos, et super ancillas meas in diebus illis effundam de Spiritu meo, et prophetabunt." Et in Osea\* dicit; "vocabo non plebem meam, plebem meam, et non misericordiam consecutam, misericordiam consecutam, et erit in loco ubi dictum est, non plebs mea vos, ubi vocabuntur filii Dei vivi."

Unde autem Hiberione, qui nunquam notitiam Dei habuerunt,

\* "Osea." The name of the prophet is more correctly given in the Salisbury copy—"Osee," which is another proof that Saint Patrick had no knowledge of any other than the Greek name of the prophet, Ὠσηε.

nisi idola et immunda usque nunc semper coluerunt; quomodo nuper facta est plebs Domini, et filii Dei nuncupantur? Filii Scottorum et filiae Regulorum, monachi et virgines Christi esse videntur. Et etiam una benedicta Scotta, genitiva nobilis, pulcherrima, adulta erat, quam ego baptizavi.\*

Et post paucos dies una causa† venit ad nos, insinuavit nobis responsum accepisse a nuntio Dei, et monuit etiam ut esset virgo Christi, et ipsa Deo proximaret. Deo gratias. Sexta ab hac die optime ad avidissime arripuit illud, quod etiam omnes virgines Dei ita hoc faciunt, non sponte patrum earum, sed persecutionem patiantur, et impropria falsa a parentibus suis; et nihilominus plus augetur numerus, et de genere nostro qui ibi nati sunt, nescimus numerum eorum, præter viduas et continentes; sed et illæ maxime laborant, quæ servitio detinentur, usque ad terrores et minas assidue perseverant. Sed Dominus gratiam dedit multis ex ancillis meis, nam sive tantum, tamen fortiter imitantur. Unde autem etsi voluero amittere illas, et ut pergens in Britannias, et libentissime paratus eram, quasi ad patriam et parentes, non id solum, sed eram usque Gallias visitare fratres, et ut viderem faciem Sanctorum Domini mei. Scit Deus quod ego valde optabam, sed alligatus Spiritu, qui mihi protestatur, si hoc fecero, ut futurum reum me esse designat, et timeo perdere laborem quem inchoavi; et non ego sed Christus Dominus qui me imperavit ut venirem esse cum illis residuum ætatis meæ; si Dominus voluerit et custodierit me ab omni via mala, ut non peccem coram illo. Spero autem hoc debueram, sed memet ipsum non credo, quamdiu fuero in hoc corpore mortis, quia fortis est qui cotidie nititur subvertere me a fide et a proposita castitate usque in finem vitæ meæ, Christo Domino

\* "Filii Scottorum, et filiae Regulorum, monachi et virgines Christi esse videntur. Et etiam una benedicta Scotta, genitiva nobilis, pulcherrima, adulta erat, quam ego baptizavi." The writer agrees with the opinion expressed by Sir W. Betham that these sentences are interpolated. The latter is not in the copy contained in the Book of Armagh.

† "Causa." The writer is of opinion that instead of this word, which is written "caussa" in the Salisbury copy, we should read "Scotta," and he has taken the liberty to translate the passage as if it stood so. The reader will observe that there are exactly the same number of letters in the words "caussa" and Scotta: a scribe may have readily made the mistake in transcribing a partially obliterated word. The writer is, however, of opinion that the change was made designedly, after the previous sentences had been interpolated. It is evident that the word "causa" has been substituted for some other word, as we may certainly infer from the numeral adjective "una" preceding it.

meo : sed caro inimica semper trahit ad mortem, id est, ad inlecebras illicite perficiendas. Et scio ex parte, quare vitam perfectam ego non egi, sicut et cæteri credentes. Sed confiteor Domino meo, et non mentior, ex quo cognovi eum, a juventute mea crevit in me amor Dei et timor ipsius, ut usque nunc favente Domino fidem servavi.

Rideat autem et insultet qui voluerit, ego non silebo, neque abscondam signa et mirabilia quæ mihi a Domino ministrata sunt, ante multos annos quam fuerant quasi qui novit omnia, etiam ante tempora secularia. Unde autem debuero sine cessatione Deo gratias agere, qui sæpe indulsit insipientiæ meæ, et de loco non in uno quoque, ut non mihi vehementer irasceretur, qui adjutor datus sum, et non cito adquievi, secundum quod mihi ostensum fuerat, et sicut Spiritus suggerebat. Et misertus est mihi Dominus in milia milium, quia vidit in me quod paratus eram, sed quod mihi pro his nesciebam de statu meo quid facerem, quia multi hanc legationem prohibebant, et jam inter se ipsos post tergum meum narrabant et dicebant ; “iste quare se mittit in periculum inter hostes qui Dominum non noverunt ?” non ut causa malitiæ, sed non sapiebat illis, sicut et ego ipse testor, intellexi, propter rusticitatem meam ; et non cito agnovi gratiam quæ tunc erat in me, nunc mihi capit quod ante debueram.

Nunc ergo simpliciter insinuavi fratribus et conservis meis qui mihi crediderunt. Propter quod prædixi et prædico, ad roborandam et confirmandam fidem vestram, utinam et vos imitemini, majora et potiora faciatis. Hoc erit gloria mea ; “Quia filius sapiens gloria patris est.”

Vos scitis et Deus, qualiter apud vos conversatus sum a juventute mea, et fide veritatis, et in sinceritate cordis : etiam ad gentes illas inter quas habito, ego fidem illis præstavi et præstabo. Deus scit neminem illorum circumveni, nec cogito propter Deum et Ecclesiam ipsius, ne excitem illis et nobis omnibus persecutionem, et ne per me blasphemaretur nomen Domini, quia scriptum est “Væ homini per quem nomen Domini blasphematur.” Nam etsi imperitus sum in omnibus, tamen conatus sum quippiam servare me etiam et fratribus Christianis, et virginibus Christi, et mulieribus religiosis, quæ mihi ultronea munuscula donabant, et super altare reddebant, ex ornamentis suis, et iterum reddebam illis. Et adversus me scandalizabantur, cur hoc faciebam. Sed ego propter spem perennitatis, ut me in omnibus caute propterea con-

servarem, ita ut me in aliquo titulo infideli non caperent, vel ministerium servitutis meæ, nec etiam in minimo incredulis locum darem infamare sive detrectare. Forte autem, quando baptizavi tot milia hominum, speraverim ab aliquo illorum vel dimidium scriptulæ. Dicite mihi et reddam vobis: aut quando ordinavit Dominus clericos per modicitatem meam et ministerium, gratis distribui illis. Si poposci ab aliquo illorum vel pretium calceamenti mei, dicite; dicite adversus me, et reddam vobis.

Magis ego impendi pro vobis, ut me caperet; et inter vos et ubique pergebam causa vestra, in multis periculis, etiam usque ad exterarum partes, ubi nemo ultra erat, et ubi nunquam aliquis pervenerat qui baptizaret, aut clericos ordinaret, aut populum consummaret, donante Domino, diligenter et libentissime pro salute vestra, omnia generavi. Interim præmia dabam Regibus, propter\* quod dabam mercedem filiis ipsorum qui mecum ambulant, et nihil\* comprehenderunt me cum comitibus meis. Et illa die avidissime cupiebant interficere me, sed tempus nondum venerat. Et omnia quæcunque nobis invenerunt, rapuerunt illa, et me ipsum ferro vinxerunt: et quarto decimo die absolvit me Dominus de potestate eorum, et quicquid nostrum fuit, redditum est nobis, propter Deum et necessarios amicos quos ante providimus. Vos autem experti estis quantum ego erogavi illis qui iudicabant per omnes regiones quas frequentius visitabam. Censeo enim non minimum pretium quindecim hominum distribui illis, ita ut me fruamini, et ego vobis semper fruam in Deum; non me poenitet nec satis est mihi, adhuc impendo et super impendam. Potens est Dominus, ut det mihi postmodum ut me ipsum impendam pro animabus vestris. Ecce testem Deum invoco in animam meam, quia non mentior, neque ut sit occasio (adulationis vel avaritiæ scripserim) vobis, neque ut honorem sperarem vestrum. Sufficit enim mihi honor qui non (videtur, sed corde creditur, fidelis autem qui promisit, nunquam) mentitur. Sed video jam in præsentis seculo me supra modum exaltatum a Domino. Et non eram dignus neque talis ut hoc mihi præstaret, cum scio (certissime quod mihi) melius convenit paupertas et calamitas, quam deliciæ et divitiæ. Sed et Christus Dominus pauper fuit pro nobis.

Ego vero miser et infelix, et si opes voluero, jam non habeo, neque me ipsum iudico, quia quotidie sperno aut interneccionem,

\* "Propter"—"Nihil." These words are correctly rendered in the Salisbury copy; the former "propter;" and the latter, "nihilominus."

aut circumveniri, aut redigi in servitutem, sive occasionem cujuslibet. Sed nihil horum vereor, propter promissa cœlorum, quia jactavi meipsum in manus Dei omnipotentis qui ubique dominatur, sicut Propheta dicit; "Jacta cogitatum tuum in Deum, et ipse te enutriet." Ecce nunc commendo animam meam fidelissimo Deo meo, pro quo legatione fungor, in ignobilitate mea. Sed quia personam non accipit, et elegit me ad hoc officium, ut unus essem de suis minimis, minister: "Unde autem retribuam illi pro omnibus quæ retribuit mihi?" Sed quid dicam, vel quid promittam Domino meo? Quia nihil video, nisi ipse mihi dederit: sed scrutabor corda et renes, quia satis et nimis cupio, et paratus eram ut donaret mihi bibere calicem ejus, sicut indulsit cæteris amantibus se.

Quapropter non contingunt mihi a Deo meo, ut unquam amittam plebem suam quam adquisivi in ultimis Terræ. Oro Deum ut det mihi perseverantiam, et dignetur ut reddam illi testem fidelem usque ad transitum meum, propter Deum meum. Et si aliquid boni unquam imitatus sum, propter Deum meum quem diligo, peto illum det mihi, ut cum illis proselitibus et captivis pro nomine suo, effundam sanguinem meum, etsi ipse etiam caream sepultura, aut miserrime cadaver per singula membra dividatur canibus, aut bestiis asperis, aut volucres cœli comederint illud. Certissime reor, si mihi hoc incurrisset, lucratus sum animam cum corpore meo; quia sine ulla dubitatione, in die illa resurgemus in claritate Solis, hoc est, in gloria Christi Jesu Redemptoris nostri, filii Dei vivi, "Cohæredes Christi et conformes futuræ imaginis ipsius:" quoniam ex ipso, et per ipsum, et in ipso, regnaturi sumus. Nam sol iste quem videmus, Deo jubente, propter nos quotidie oritur, sed nunquam regnabit, neque permanebit splendor ejus. Sed et omnes qui adorant eum, in poenam miseri male devenient. Nos autem credimus et adoramus Solem verum, Christum qui nunquam interibit, neque qui facit voluntatem ipsius, sed manebit in æternum, quomodo et Christus manebit in æternum, qui regnat cum Deo Patre omnipotente, et cum Spiritu Sancto, ante secula, et nunc, et per omnia secula seculorum, Amen.

Ecce iterum breviter exponam verba confessionis meæ. Testificor in veritate, et in exultatione cordis, coram Deo et sanctis Angelis ejus, quia nunquam habui aliquam occasionem, præter Evangelium et promissa illius, ut unquam redderem\* agentem illam, unde autem prius vix evaseram. \*(Lege—ut unquam redirem ad Gentem, &c.)

Sed precor credentibus et timentibus Deum, quicumque dignatus fuerit inspicere vel recipere hanc scripturam, quam Patricius peccator (indoctus scilicet) Hiberione conscripsit, ut nemo unquam dicat quod mea ignorantia, si aliquid pusillum ego vel demonstraverim, secundum Dei placitum. Sed arbitramini, et verissime credatur, quod donum Dei fuisset. Et hæc est Confessio mea, antequam moriar.







## SANCTI PATRICII

### AD COROTICUM EPISTOLA.

**P**ATRICIUS peccator, indoctus scilicet, Hiberione constitutum Episcopum me esse fateor. Certissime reor, a Deo accepi id quod sum. Inter barbaros itaque habito proselitus et profuga, ob amorem Dei. Testis est ille, si ita est: non quod optabam tam dure et tam aspere ex ore meo effundere, sed cogor zelo Dei et veritatis Christi, (qui) excitavit me pro dilectione proximorum atque filiorum, pro quibus tradidi patriam et parentes, et animam meam usque ad mortem, si dignus sum. Vovi Deo meo docere gentes, etsi contemnor a quibus manu mea scripsi atque condidi verba ista, danda et tradenda militibus, mittenda Corotico, non dico civibus meis, neque civibus Sanctorum Romanorum, sed civibus Dæmoniorum, ob mala opera ipsorum, ritu hostili. In morte vivunt Socii Scottorum atque Pictorum Apostatarum, quæ sanguinolentos sanguinare de sanguine innocentium Christianorum, quos ego innumeros Deo genui, atque in Christo confirmavi, postera die qua chrismati Neophyti in veste candida flagrabant in fronte ipsorum, dum crudeliter trucidati atque mactati gladio a supra dictis. Et misi Epistolam cum sancto Presbytero, quem ego ex infantia docui, cum clericis, ut nobis aliquid indulgerent de præda, vel de captivis baptizatis quos ceperunt, (sed) cachinnos fecerunt de illis. Idcirco nescio quos magis lugeam, an qui interfecti, vel quos ceperunt, vel quos graviter Zabulus inlaquiavit, perhenni pœna gehennæ, (ubi) pariter cum ipso mancipabunt. Quia utique qui facit peccatum servus est, et filius Zabuli nuncupatur.

Quapropter sciat omnis homo timens Deum, quod a me alieni sunt et a Christo Domino meo, pro quo legatione fungor, Patriciæ, Fratricidæ, Lupi rapaces, "Devorantes plebem Domini, ut cibum panis," sicut ait; "iniqui dissipaverunt legem tuam

Domine," quæ in supremis temporibus Hiberiæ optime benigne plantata atque instructa erat favente Deo. Non usurpo, partem habeo cum his quos advocavit, et prædestinavit Evangelium prædicare, in persecutionibus non parvis, usque ad extremum Tetraë. Etsi invidet inimicus per tyrannidem Corōtici, qui Deum non veretur, nec Sacerdotes ipsius, quos eligit et indulsit illis summam, divinam, sublimem potestatem, "quos ligarent super terram, ligatos esse et in cœlis." Unde ergo (quæso) plurimum sancti et humiles corde, adulari talibus non licet, nec cibum nec potum sumere cum ipsis, nec eleemosynas ipsorum recipere debere, donec crudeliter effusis lachrymis satis Deo faciant, et liberent servos Dei et ancillas Christi baptizatas, pro quibus mortuus est et crucifixus. "Dona iniquorum reprobatur Altissimus, qui offert sacrificium ex substantia pauperum, quasi qui victimat filium in conspectu patris sui. Divitiæ (inquit) quas congregabit injustus evomentur de ventre ejus; trahit illum Angelus mortis. Ira Draconum multabitur, interficiet illum lingua colubri." Comedet autem eum ignis inextinguibilis. Ideoque "væ qui replent se quæ non sunt sua." Vel, "quid protest homini ut totum mundum lucretur, et animæ suæ detrimentum patiatur?"

Longum est per singula discutere vel insinuare, per totam legem carpere testimonia de tali cupiditate. Avaritia mortale crimen. "Non concupisces rem proximi tui." "Non occides." Homicida non potest esse cum Christo. "Qui odit fratrem suum, homicida adscribitur," vel, "qui non diligit fratrem suum in morte manet." Quanto magis reus est, qui manus suas coinquinavit in sanguine filiorum Dei, quos nuper adquisivit in Ultimis Terræ, per exhortationem parvitatæ nostræ.

Numquid sine Deo, vel secundum carnem Hiberiæ veni? Quis me compulit alligatus Spiritu, ut non videam aliquem de cognatione mea? Numquid piam misericordiam ago erga gentem illam quæ me aliquando ceperunt, et devastaverunt servos et ancillas domus patris mei? Ingenuus fui secundum carnem, Decorione patre nascor. Vendidi enim nobilitatem meam. Non erubesco, neque me pœnitet pro utilitate aliorum. Denique servus sum in Christo Jesu Domino nostro, etsi mei me non cognoscunt. "Propheta in patriâ suâ honorem non habet." Forte non sumus ex uno ovili, neque unum Deum patrem habemus; sicut ait, "Qui non est mecum, contra me est, et qui non congregat mecum, spargit." Non convenit, "Unus destruit, alter ædificat." Non

quæro quæ mea sunt. Non mea gratia. Sed Deus quidem hanc sollicitudinem in corde meo, ut unus essem de venatoribus, sive piscatoribus, quos olim Deus in novissimis diebus antè pronuntiavit. Invidetur mihi? Quid faciam Domine? Valdè despicor. Ecce oves tuæ circa me laniantur atque depredantur a supra dictis latrunculis, jubente Corotico, hostili mente (longe est a charitatè Dei traditor Christianorum) in manus Scottorum atque Pictorum. Lupi rapaces deglutierunt gregem Domini, qui utique Hiberione cum summa diligentia optimè crescebat; et filii Scottorum et filiae regularum, monachi et virgines Christi: enumerare nequeo. Quamobrem "injuria justorum non tibi placeat, etiam usque ad inferos non placebit." Quis sanctorum non horreat jocundare vel convivio frui cum talibus? De spoliis defunctorum Christianorum repleverunt domos suas, de rapinis vivunt. Nesciunt miseri venenum, letalem cibum porrigunt ad amicos et filios suos;—sicut Eva non intellexit quod mortem tradidit viro suo; sic sunt omnes qui malè agunt, mortem perennem pœnam operantur.

Consuetudo Romanorum et Gallorum Christianorum, mittunt viros sanctos idoneos ad Francos et cæteras gentes, cum tot mil. solidorum, ad redimendos captivos baptizatos. Tu toties interficis, et vendis illos genti extræ ignorant Deum, quasi in lupanar tradis membra Christi. Qualem spem habes in Deum? vel qui te consentit? aut qui te communicat verbis adulationis? Deus judicabit. Scriptum est enim: "Non solum facientes mala, sed etiam consentientes damnandi sunt." Nescio quid dicam, aut quid loquar amplius, de defunctis filiorum Dei, quos gladius supra modum dure tetigit. Scriptum est enim "Flete cum flentibus," et iterum, "si dolet unum membrum, condoleant omnia membra."

Quapropter Ecclesia plorat, et planget filios et filias suas, quas adhuc gladius nondum interfecit, sed prolongati et exportati in longa terrarum, ubi peccatum manifestè gravetur, impudenter, abundat. Ibi venundati ingenui homines Christiani in servitutem redacti sunt, præsertim indignissimorum, pessimorum, apostatarumque Pictorum. Idcirco cum tristitia et mœrore vociferabor; O speciosissimi atque amantissimi fratres et filii quos in Christo genui, enumerare nequeo, quid faciam vobis! Non sum dignus Deo neque hominibus subvenire. Prævaluit iniquitas iniquorum super nos. Quasi extranei facti sumus. Fortè non credunt "unum baptismum percipimus," vel, "unum Deum patrem habemus." Indignum est illis: Hiberia nati sumus, sicut ait "Nonne unum

Deum habetis? Quid dereliquistis unusquisque proximum suum?" Idcirco doleo pro vobis, doleo charissimi mihi: sed iterum gaudeo intra meipsum, non gratis laboravi, vel peregrinatio mea in vacuum non fuit, et contigit scelus tam horrendum, ineffabile. Deo gratias, creduli baptizati, de seculo recessitis, ad Paradisum (cerno) vos migrare coepistis, "ubi nox non erit, neque luctus, neque mors amplius." Sed "exultabitis, sicut vituli ex vinculis resoluti, et conculcabit iniquos, et erunt cinis sub pedibus vestris." Vos ergo regnabitis cum Apostolis et Prophetis atque martyribus æterna regna capietis: sicut ipse testatur (inquit) "Venient ab oriente et occidente, et recumbent cum Abraham et Isaac et Jacob, in regno cœlorum." "Foris canes, et venefici, et homicidæ, et mendaces perjuri:" "pars eorum in stagnum ignis æterni." Non immerito ait Apostolus, "Ubi justus vix salvus erit; peccator et impius transgressor legis, ubi se recognoscit?" Unde enim Coroticus cum suis sceleratissimis rebellatoribus Christi, ubi se videbunt (quum inter mulierculas baptizatas præmia distribuuntur) ob miserum regnum temporale, quod utique in momento transeat, sicut nubes, vel fumus qui utique vento dispergitur? Ita peccatores fraudulentum a facie Domini peribunt: justis autem epulentur in magna constantia cum Christo: judicabunt nationes, et regibus iniquis dominabuntur in secula seculorum. Amen.

Testificor coram Deo et Angelis suis quod ita erit, sicut intimavit imperitiæ meæ: non mea verba, sed Dei et Apostolorum, atque Prophetarum (quod ego Latinum exposui), qui nunquam enim mentiti sunt. "Qui crediderit salvus erit, qui vero non crediderit, condemnabitur." Deus locutus est. Quæso plurimum, ut quicumque famulus Dei, ut promptus fuerit, ut sit gerulus literarum harum, ut nequiquam subtrahatur a nemine, sed magis potius legatur coram cunctis plebibus, et coram ipso Corotico. Quod si Deus inspirat illos, ut quandoque Deo respiciant, et vel sero pœniteant, quod tam impie gesserunt homicidæ, erga fratres Domini, et liberent captivas baptizatas quas ante ceperunt, ita ut mereantur Deo vivere, et sani efficiantur hic et in æternum. Pax Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. Amen.





THE CONFESSION OF SAINT PATRICK;  
OR  
HIS EPISTLE TO THE IRISH.

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**P**ATRICK, a sinner, who am the rudest and the most insignificant of all the faithful, and, in the estimation of very many people, most contemptible, had Calpornius, a Deacon, for my father, who was the son of the late Potitus, a Presbyter, who resided in the village of Banavan Taberniæ. For he had a little farm adjacent where I was captured. I was then nearly sixteen years of age. I knew not the true God, and I was led to Ireland in captivity, with many thousand men, according to our deserts, because we kept apart from God, and did not keep His commandments, and were disobedient to our priests who admonished us for our salvation; and the Lord hath brought down upon us the anger of His Spirit, and hath dispersed us among many nations, even to the extremity of the earth, where my littleness is now conspicuous amongst foreigners. And there the Lord discovered to me a sense of my unbelief, that, though late, I should remember my transgressions, and that I should be converted with my whole heart to the Lord my God; who regarded my lowliness, and had compassion upon my youth and ignorance, and took care of me before I could discern or distinguish between good and evil, and protected me, and comforted me, as a father would a son.

Wherefore I am not able, neither indeed is it right, to be silent on such great benefits and so great grace as the Lord hath vouchsafed to give to me in the land of my captivity, because this is our recompense (to Him) that after being forcibly brought to the knowledge of the Lord, we should exalt and confess His wonderful works before every nation which is under the whole heaven, for there is no other God, nor ever was, nor shall be hereafter, except God the Father, unbegotten, without beginning, from whom is all

beginning, upholding all things (as we have said); and His Son Jesus Christ, whom we testify certainly to have been always with the Father, before the beginning of time; spiritually with the Father, in an ineffable manner begotten before all beginning; and by Him were made things visible and invisible; and being made man, and having overcome death, He was received into heaven unto the Father. And (the Father) hath given unto Him all power, above every name, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things infernal, that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and God, whom we believe, and look for His coming; who is soon about to be the judge of the quick and the dead; who will render unto every man according to his works: and hath poured on us abundantly the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the pledge of immortality; who maketh the faithful and obedient to become the sons of God the Father, and joint heirs with Christ, whom we confess and adore one God in the Trinity of the sacred name. For He Himself hath said by the prophet, "Call upon me in the day of thy tribulation, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt magnify me." And again He saith, "It is honourable to reveal and to confess the works of God." Although I am in many points imperfect, I wish my brethren and kindred to know my quality, that they may be able fully to understand the desire of my soul. I am not ignorant of the testimony of my Lord, who declares in the Psalm, "Thou shalt destroy those who speak lies;" and again, "The mouth which speaketh lies slayeth the soul." And the same Lord saith in the Gospel, "That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Wherefore (I ought), with fear and trembling, very greatly to dread this sentence on that day, when no one will be able to withdraw or to hide himself, but we are all together to render an account even of our smallest faults before the judgment-seat of the Lord Christ.

Wherefore, I long ago thought of writing, but hesitated even until now. For I feared lest I should fall under the censure of men, because I have not read like others, who, being taught in the best manner, therefore rightly, in every way, both drank in sacred learning in a proper manner, and have never changed their language from childhood, but rather constantly added to its perfection. For my language and speech is translated into a foreign tongue, as may be easily observed from the homely style of my writing, after

what manner I have been prepared and instructed in languages; as the Wise man saith, "by the tongue is distinguished both sense and science, and the knowledge of variety." But what avails an excuse, although it be in accordance with truth, especially with presumption? Since I only seek in my old age to perfect that which I had not before thoroughly learned in my youth, because my sins were a hindrance to me. But who believes me? And if I shall say (what I have already declared) that whilst a youth, nay, almost a beardless boy, I was captured, before I knew what I should seek, or what I ought to avoid. Therefore I blush to-day, and dread very much to expose my ignorance, because I am unable to explain myself with the brevity of a well and clearly arranged speech, as the Spirit influences, and the endowed mind and intellect point out. But if, and so it had been given to me as to others, yet, however, I would not be silent on account of the recompense, although, perhaps, it seems to some that, in this matter, I undertake with my ignorance and slowness of speech (what I am not able to do). But it is written, "Stammering tongues shall quickly learn to speak peace:" by how much the more ought we, who are, as is said, "Epistles of Christ," to seek for salvation even to the ends of the earth; though not eloquent, yet fixed and indelibly written in your hearts, "not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God." And again the Spirit testifies, "And husbandry has been ordained by the Most High."

Whence I, the first rustic fugitive, and indeed unlearned, who knows not how to provide for the morrow; but this I know most assuredly, that as before I was humbled, I was like a stone lying in deep mud, and He, who is powerful, came, and in His mercy supported me, and he indeed raised me up, and hath placed me on the top of a wall, and thence I ought boldly to cry out, in order to return some recompense to the Lord for His so great benefits, here and for ever, which the mind of man is not able to estimate. Wherefore do you, great and small, who fear God, wonder, and ye, of the Gauls, who are ignorant of the Lord the Rhetorician, hear and examine diligently, who aroused me, a fool, from the midst of those who appear to be wise, and skilled in the law, and powerful in speech, and in every respect, and me even, who am detested by this world, hath He inspired above others that I might be so distinguished; but provided only that with fear and reverence, and without complaining, I should faithfully serve this nation, to whom

the love of Christ brought me over, and hath given me in my life, if I shall be worthy; in short, that with humility and truth I should serve them.

In the measure, therefore, of the faith of the Trinity, it behoves me to extol, without holding back on account of danger, and to make known the gift of God and His eternal consolation, and confidently to magnify the name of God everywhere without fear, so that, also, after my death, I may leave to my Gallic brethren, and to my sons whom I have baptized in the Lord, so many thousand men. And I was not worthy nor so deserving, as that the Lord should grant this to his slave, and should, after my misfortunes and so great calamities, after my captivity, after many years, give me so great favour among that people, which I once, in my youth, never hoped for nor expected.

But, after I had come to Ireland, I was employed daily in feeding cattle, and oftentimes during the day I prayed, and the love of God, and the fear of Him, grew more and more, and my vigour of mind increased, so that in one day I made as many as a hundred prayers, and in the night nearly a like number; so also when I passed the night in the woods or on the mountain, I was roused before day-light to prayer through snow, through frost, or through rain, and felt no harm, neither was there any slothfulness in me, as I now perceive, because the Spirit was then hot within me.

And then, indeed, on a certain night, I heard in my sleep a voice saying to me, "Thou fastest well, thou art quickly about to go to thy country." And again, after a very short interval, I heard an answer addressed to me, "Behold thy ship is ready." And it was not near, but was, perhaps, two hundred miles off; and I had never been there, neither did I know any of the people there. And after a while, I took to flight, and left the man with whom I had been for six years. And I came in the strength of the Lord, who directed my way aright, and I feared nothing until I came to the ship. And on the same day on which I arrived, the ship was to sail from her place, and I told them that I had wherewith to pay, that I might sail with them. And it displeased the master of the vessel, and he answered sharply with disdain, "You by no means need seek to go with us." And when I had heard this, I separated myself from them to go to a cottage where I had been entertained, and on the way I began to pray, and before I could finish my prayer, I heard one of them loudly calling after me,



"Come quickly, for these men call thee;" and immediately I returned to them, and they began to say to me, "Come, because we receive you with confidence; make a friendly compact with us in what way you wish." So that day I ceased to fly, through the fear of God. But, however, I hoped of them, that they would say to me, "Come in the faith of Jesus Christ," because they were Gentiles.

And in this I prevailed with them (and we sailed immediately afterwards); and after three days we landed, and for twenty-eight days we made our way through a desert, and food failed, and hunger prevailed over them. And one day the master began to say to me—"What do you say, Christian? your God is great and all-powerful; why, then, can you not pray for us, for we are in danger of famishing? for it is doubtful if ever we may again see a human being." For I plainly told them, "Be ye sincerely converted, and with your whole heart, to the Lord our God, for nothing is impossible to Him, that He may to-day send you food on your road, even until you are satisfied, because He has everywhere abundance." And, with God's help, it was so done; behold! a herd of swine appeared in the road before our eyes; and they killed many of them, and remained there for two nights well recruited; and were revived by their flesh, for many of them had fainted, and had been left along the road half dead. And after these things they gave the greatest thanks to God, and I was honoured in their eyes. (And from that day they had abundance of food). They also found wild honey, and offered part of it to me. And one of them said, "This is offered in sacrifice, give thanks to God." Hence I tasted none of it. But on the same night I was asleep, and Satan strongly tempted me, which I shall remember as long as I shall be in this body. And he fell upon me like a huge rock, injuring, however, none of my limbs. But why it came into my mind, that I should call Helias, I know not: and in the meanwhile I saw the sun arise in the heavens, and whilst I called Helias! Helias! with all my might, behold, the splendour of the sun fell upon me, and immediately removed from me the oppressive weight; and I believe that I was succoured by my Lord Christ, and that his Spirit even then cried out for me, and I hope that it will be thus in the day of my oppression, as He says in the Gospel. In that day the Lord testifies, "It is not ye who speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaks in you."

And again after a few years I suffered a further captivity: and

on the very first night I was with them, I heard a divine communication saying to me, "For two months thou shalt be with them," which so came to pass. On the sixtieth night the Lord delivered me out of their hands. Lo, He provided for us food and fire, and dry weather every day, during our journey, until on the fourteenth day we met with human beings; and, as I have above mentioned, for twenty-eight days we made our way through a desert, and on the very night on which we arrived at the dwellings of men, we had no food left.\*

And again after a few years I was in Britain with my parents, who received me as a son, and earnestly entreated me that I would never again depart from them after the many calamities I had undergone. And there, indeed, I saw in a vision in the night a man

\* We have no good grounds for believing that the saint here speaks of a second captivity. The words "Et iterum, post annos non" at the beginning of this paragraph, upon which the belief in a second captivity must entirely rest, are altogether wanting in the Armagh copy of the Confession; and the person who made the Salisbury copy, finding that the remark, here made by the Saint, so evidently related to his captivity (if it can be so called) with the party in whose company he made his escape from Ireland, and that it was wholly inconsistent with the first portion of the paragraph, has omitted the last sentence commencing with the word "Ecce," which is, however, found in both the Armagh and Cottonian copies, and which, therefore, we cannot reject. It is evident, then, that we cannot depend upon the whole paragraph, as it stands now, as being correct and free from error in the transcribing of it. The way in which the error was originally made is easy of explanation. The paragraph now under consideration is a very short one; and, as the reader will observe, the following paragraph commences with almost exactly the same words, "Et iterum post paucos annos;" it is therefore, not only probable, but almost certain, that some scribe, in making a copy, inadvertently inserted these words out of their proper place, and thus originated a mistake which quite misrepresents the meaning of the statement made by the Saint. It is evident, beyond the possibility of a doubt on the subject, by his reference to, and repetition of the statement, that "for twenty-eight days we made our way through a desert, as I have above mentioned," that the remarks contained in this paragraph were made by him in continuation of his account of his journey with the party in whose company he made his escape from Ireland. As the introduction of the word "captivity" in this place may require some explanation, I beg to observe that it may have been introduced either by accident or design, and if not, it is extremely probable that St. Patrick, if not actually treated as such, may have considered himself to have been a captive: it would be very natural that, having just made his escape from a bondage of six years' duration, he should be extremely suspicious of the designs of the party into whose power he immediately afterwards fell.

whose name was Victoricius, coming, as it were, from Ireland, with innumerable letters, and he gave one of them to me, and I read the beginning of the letter containing, "The voice of the Irish." And, whilst I read aloud the beginning of the letter, I thought that I heard, at that moment, the voice of those who were nigh the wood Focluti, which is near the western sea. And they cried thus as if with one voice, "We entreat thee, holy youth, that thou mayest come, and henceforth walk amongst us." And I was greatly pricked in my heart, and could not read further; and so I was awakened. Thanks be to God, that after very many years the Lord granted to them, according to their cry. Again, on another night, I know not, God knoweth, whether it was within me or nigh me, in words most skilfully expressed, which I heard, but could not understand, except at the last part of the speech, He thus addressed me, "He who gave his life for thee." And so I awoke rejoicing. And again I saw in myself one praying, and I was, as it were, within my body, and I heard him above me, that is, above my inner man, and he prayed there mightily with groanings. And meanwhile I was struck with astonishment, and marvelled, and pondered who it could be who prayed within me. But at the end of the prayer, he so expressed himself, that he was the Holy Ghost. And so I awoke, and recollected the Apostle saying, "The Spirit helpeth the infirmity of our prayer." "For we know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself prayeth for us with groanings that cannot be uttered, which cannot be expressed in words." And again, "The Lord our advocate maketh intercession for us."

And when I was attacked by some of my seniors who came, and urged my sins as a reason why I should not be placed in the difficult office of a bishop, surely I was on that day vehemently impelled that I might fall both in this world and for everlasting. But the Lord spared His proselyte and stranger, and, for His name's sake, with great goodness succoured me in this attempt to trample me under foot, so that I did not fall into ruin and disgrace. I pray God that this be not reckoned against them as an occasion of sin. After thirty years they came upon me, and against the word which I had confessed before I became a Deacon, and which I had, through grief, and with a troubled spirit, made known to my most intimate friend, what in my boyhood I had on one day done—nay, in one hour—because I was not then sufficiently

matured in wisdom. I know not, God knows, if I was at that time fifteen years of age, neither from my infancy did I believe in the living God, but remained in death and in unbelief, until I was very severely chastised, and was humbled to the truth by hunger and nakedness, and that daily. On the other hand, I did not of my own accord think of going to Ireland, until I had become almost quite dejected. But this was far better for me, because I was cured of this by the Lord, and He made me fit that I should be this day what once was far from me, namely, that I should be filled with anxiety, and be so busily employed about the salvation of others; when at that time I did not even think about myself.

Then on that day in which I was reproached by those well-remembered persons above-mentioned, on that night, I saw in a vision of the night, there was a writing opposite to my face without honour. And in the meanwhile, I heard a divine communication saying to me—"We have unfortunately seen the face of a Designatus\* though wanting that name." He did not say—"thou

§ \* *Designatus*.—This term was applied by the Romans to those priests whose peculiar duty it was to select the victims for sacrifice, in their worship of the heathen gods. It is evident that St. Patrick in the account which he here gives us of what took place at the time when he was ordained a bishop, and of the part which his treacherous friend, whom he styles "*amicissimus meus*," acted on that occasion, points to him as the *Designatus*, and to himself as the intended victim. The use of this word by the Saint forms a very strong argument in support of the belief that he lived at a time when the religion of Rome was pagan, and when the worship of the heathen gods was generally practised. If the Saint died, as is alleged, in the year 492, as we know that the pagan religion and the worship of the gods had been utterly abolished throughout the Roman Empire in the reign of the Emperor Theodosius I., who died in A.D. 395 (see *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, by Edward Gibbon, vol. v., chap. xxviii.), he must have written this about one hundred years after the practice of that worship by the Romans had entirely ceased, and when the term *Designatus* had become obsolete, and must have been altogether unknown, more particularly in Ireland. If Saint Patrick wrote his Confession at any time about the year 490, or even at a much earlier date, introducing, as he does, the word *Designatus* into his address to the Irish people, it would have been absolutely necessary that he should have followed it by an explanation of what he meant by it. The use of this word by the Saint forms of itself an almost convincing proof that he lived at a time when the heathen worship of the gods was generally practised by the Romans, and when the term *Designatus*, as applied to a priest, was in ordinary use, and well understood. The character of the Saint, which is eminent for honesty and simplicity of purpose, leaves us no room whatever

hast unfortunately seen," but, "we have unfortunately seen," as if He had included Himself, as He hath said—"He who toucheth you, is as one who touches the pupil of mine eye." Therefore I give thanks to Him who hath comforted me in all things, and did not hinder me from the journey which I had decided on, nor from my work which I had learned from Christ. But on the contrary, I felt in me no small power from Him, and my faithfulness was proved before God and man. Wherefore I boldly say, my conscience reproves me not here nor in the time to come.

I have God as a witness that I have not lied in the statements which I have recounted to you. But I grieve exceedingly for my very dear friend, to whom I would have trusted my life, that we have got to listen to such a recapitulation. And I ascertained from some of my brethren, that before my said defence, when I had taken no part in the matter, as I was not in Britain\* at the time, neither

for the supposition that he would, for a display of his learning, or from any other motive, have introduced into his epistle a phrase which must have rendered the whole passage inexplicable to his readers.

\* We learn from a previous passage in this epistle (see page 121) that the Saint had laboured long as a Deacon and Presbyter, and that he was, at the least, forty-five years of age when he was raised to the rank of a bishop. We are left in some doubt as to the point of time from which he counted the thirty years there mentioned by him. If he reckoned them from his fifteenth year in which he committed the act which was charged against him as a sin which rendered him unworthy of ordination as a bishop, he was then just forty-five years of age; but if he reckoned them from the time when he privately confessed it to his friend, just before he was ordained a Deacon, he must have been not less than fifty-five years of age. The statement here incidentally made by the Saint, that the question of making him a bishop was raised and discussed, and, as we may certainly conclude, settled in Britain, read in connexion with other statements found in his writings, appears to the writer to establish beyond dispute two most important facts, viz., that he had been labouring as a minister of the Gospel in Ireland for many years previously in the offices of Deacon and Presbyter, and—that he received ordination as a bishop from some members of the Church in Britain. As to the latter fact, with the statement of the Saint now before us, that the propriety of making him a bishop had been advocated and discussed amongst the members of the Church in Britain, and in the absence of any allusion whatever to any other Church, it is impossible for us to arrive at any other conclusion than that he was so ordained in Britain. And, as regards the former fact, it is evident that the Saint had been previously ordained, and had been labouring *somewhere* as a minister of the Gospel. Now, if he had been so labouring in Gaul till the forty-fifth year of his age, and had then purposed the evangelizing of the Irish, how is it possible to conceive that any members of the Church in Britain should have taken anything whatever to do with his ordina-

did it originate with me, that he both in my absence stirred actively in my behalf, and he also said to me with his own mouth, "You ought certainly to be raised to the rank of a Bishop!" of which I was not worthy. Wherefore then did it occur to him afterwards, that he should try, before all good men, and bad men, publickly to disgrace me, to whom he had before of his own

tion as a bishop? If such a preparatory step had been deemed expedient either by himself or by the Church to which he belonged, would he not have sought for and obtained ordination at the hands of the chief pastors of that Church, under whom he had ministered, and to whom he was best known? Resting the case, then, on mere probabilities, we certainly have no reasons whatever for supposing that he was ever engaged in preaching the Gospel in Gaul; but when we take into account his assertion that the Irish people "knew what his conduct and conversation had been amongst them from his youth," we can have no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that he had been engaged in preaching the Gospel and teaching the Irish people from a very early period in his life, first as a Deacon, and afterwards as a Presbyter. In summing up the whole case thus founded on statements in the writings of the Saint, and elsewhere, on this subject, the writer feels assured that he now presents to the public a simple and consistent, and, as truth is always simple and consistent, a true and reasonable account of that part of his history which relates especially to his several ordinations as Deacon, Presbyter, and Bishop. Shortly after his escape from slavery in Ireland, he received his education fitting him for the ministry, and, probably, his ordination also as a Deacon, in Gaul. This is certain, as, in addition to the statements found in the Saint's own writings in proof of it, the fact is stated in most of his "Lives," which, although they err altogether as to the time at which he so received his education, and the manner of it, yet truly state this fact. Returning immediately afterwards to Britain, where we have reason to suppose that he spent some short time, he made known to the Church there his intention of spreading the Gospel in Ireland, where he had some years before been a slave, and made arrangement for carrying on that work in connexion with that Church. As he tells us so plainly that he preached the Gospel to the Irish people gratuitously, and that even as bishop he exacted nothing from them as dues or fees, he must have supported himself entirely from his own private means, or what is more probable, from contributions in support of his mission from the Church in Britain. After labouring for some years as a Deacon, he was in due time ordained a Presbyter by that Church; and after working successfully for twenty, perhaps for thirty, years, he was by the same Church raised to the office of a Bishop, as he was thought, no doubt, to be worthy of that honour, and as it was deemed proper and expedient for the benefit of the Church which he had planted that he should be invested with the authority and powers appertaining to that office. Now, this is the story, and the only story, which we can gather from the Saint's own statements; and a more simple and consistent story, regarded in the light of reason and common sense, and more particularly keeping in view the geographical position of Ireland with respect to Britain and Gaul, it is impossible to imagine.

accord, and with such apparent pleasure been so complaisant? But the Lord is greater than all: I have said enough. But, however, I ought not to hide the gift of God, which He has bountifully imparted to us in the land of my captivity; because I at that time, earnestly sought Him, and I found Him, and He preserved me from all iniquity. So, I believe, on account of the indwelling of His Spirit, who has wrought even to this day in me, who looks with confidence to the past. But God knows if man had spoken to me, I might have been silent about the love of Christ: wherefore I give unwearied thanks to my God, who faithfully kept me in the day of my temptation, so that to-day I can, with confidence, offer the sacrifice,—the living sacrifice, of my soul to Christ my Lord, who hath kept me in all my straits: so that I may say, "Who am I, Lord, or what is my calling, that thou hast covered me with so great godliness? So that I can now constantly exult and magnify thy name amongst the nations, wherever I shall be, whether in prosperity, or even in adversity; that whatever may happen to me, whether good or evil, I may bear it alike, and always give thanks to God, who has shown me that I should place no bounds to my trust in Him, who hath granted to me, that even I, ignorant as I am, should, in these latter days, attempt to undertake this work so righteous and so admirable, so that I should imitate some of those whom the Lord hath heretofore preordained to preach His Gospel, as a testimony to all nations, before the end of the world." Which has therefore (as we have consequently seen) been so fulfilled. Lo! we are witnesses that the Gospel has been preached to the end of the habitable earth (*usque ubi nemo ultra est*—literally—as far as a place beyond which there is no man).

It were tedious to recite all my labours singly, or in parts. I may briefly state how the most holy God often liberated me from slavery,—from twelve dangers in which my life was in peril, besides many snares and difficulties which I cannot express in words; but I will not trouble my readers: yea, I have a Creator who knew all things, even before they were made—even me his poor little child. Hence was I frequently admonished by the divinely inspired question, whence did I derive this wisdom which was not in me, who neither knew the number of my days, nor had a knowledge of God? Whence, moreover, has it been my lot to comprehend and so highly esteem this so great and so salutary gift of God, that I should abandon my country and parents, and

refuse the many gifts which were offered to me with weeping and tears? And I gave them great offence, and acted against the wishes of not a few of my seniors, but God overruling me, I in no way consented nor complied with them ; yet no thanks to me, for it was God who conquered in me and resisted them all to the intent that I might come to the Irish people to preach the Gospel, and I bore the insults of the unbelieving, and the many persecutions even to bonds, and listened to reproachful language about my purposed wandering to a foreign country, and that I should give up my nobility for the benefit of others. And if I shall be worthy, I am ready without any delay, and with the greatest pleasure to give up my life also for his name's sake ; and there I desire to spend it, even to my death, if the Lord indulge me in this : because I am very greatly a debtor to God who has given me so much favour, that many people have through me been born again to God, and afterwards confirmed ; and that clergy should everywhere be ordained for this people lately coming to the faith, whom the Lord hath taken from the ends of the earth, as he had formerly promised by the prophets,—“The nations shall come to thee from the ends of the earth and shall say,—as our fathers prepared false idols, and there is no use in them.” And again, “I have set thee to be a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be for salvation even to the end of the earth.” And there I wish to await his promise, who indeed never deceives, as he promises in the Gospel, “They shall come from the East and from the West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob.” So we trust believers shall come from all parts of the world.

Therefore it behoves us to fish well and diligently, as the Lord premonishes, saying,—“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” And again he says by the Prophet, “Behold I send fishers many and hunters many, saith the Lord,” &c. Wherefore it very greatly behoves us to spread our nets so that a very numerous multitude and crowd should be taken for God, and that there should everywhere be clergy who would baptize and would exhort a poor people standing in need of, and desiring such a service as the Lord in the Gospel enjoins and teaches, saying—“Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”



And again he says, "Go ye therefore into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that hath believed and had been baptized shall be saved, but he who hath not believed shall be damned." And again,—“This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.” And also the Lord foretelling by the prophet, saith—“And it shall come to pass in the last days saith the Lord, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams, and also upon my servants, and upon my handmaidens in those days will I pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophecy.” And in Osea he saith, “I will call my people, not my people, and, having obtained mercy, not having obtained mercy, and it shall come to pass that in the place where it was said, ye are not my people, there they shall be called the sons of the living God.”

Whence, I say then, is it, that in Ireland where they have never had any knowledge of God, and until now have always worshipped only filthy idols—how is it, that it has lately come to pass, that they are called the people of the Lord, and the sons of God? The sons of the Scots, and the daughters of the chieftains appear now as monks and virgins of Christ.—Especially one blessed Scottish lady, of noble birth, and very beautiful, who was adult, and whom I have baptized.

And after a few days, a Scottish lady came before us, and declared to us that she had received a communication from a messenger of God, who counselled her that she should become a virgin of Christ, and that by so doing she would draw nearer to God. I thank God: on the sixth day after that, she in the most pleasant and eager manner took that upon her, which also all the virgins of God likewise do, not with the will of their fathers, but they suffer persecution, and bear false and undeserved reproaches from their parents; and, notwithstanding this, the number is the more increased, and of our people who were born there, we know not the number of them, besides chaste widows; but those chiefly labour under very great difficulties, who are detained in slavery, and constantly persevere, notwithstanding continual threats and other causes of fear. But the Lord hath given his grace to many of my handmaidens, and if it be doubtful whether they have received so much grace, they, however, strongly resemble those who have.

Wherefore, though I shall have wished to leave them, and to go into Britain, as I should with the greatest pleasure make this journey, as going to my country and kindred, and not thither only, but also that I might go even as far as Gaul to visit my brethren, and that I might see the faces of my Lord's Saints. The Lord knows that I very greatly desired this, but, constrained by the Spirit, who professed to me, if I shall do this, that he will hold me accountable for what may happen, and I fear to injure the work which I have begun : yet not I, but Christ the Lord who commanded me to come and remain with them for the rest of my life, if the Lord will, and if he will keep me from every evil way, that I may not sin against him. I hope that I may be indebted to him for this, for I do not trust myself, so long as I shall be in this body of death, because he is strong who daily endeavours to turn me from the faith, and from my purposed uprightness, and at the end of my life, from Christ my Lord : but the flesh which wars against the Spirit, always leads to death, that is, to allurements unlawfully followed up. And I partly know, why I have not led a perfect life like other believers. But I avow to my Lord, and I do not lie, that from the time when I first knew him, the love of God and the fear of him has grown in me from my youth, so that I have, by the power of God, always till now kept the faith.

Let who will scoff and revile, I will not remain silent, neither will I conceal the signs and wonders which have been shown to me by the Lord, who knew all things even before the time of this world, many years before, just as they happened. Wherefore I ought without ceasing to give thanks to God, who often, and not on one occasion alone, overlooked my folly, and was not very angry with me, who, although I was constituted his helper, did not yield a ready compliance with that which was pointed out to me, and as the Spirit prompted. And the Lord had compassion on me in innumerable instances, because he saw that I was ready and willing, but that I knew not how I should act in my situation, by reason of certain persons, because many parties endeavoured to obstruct me in undertaking this office of an ambassador, and on those occasions they talked among themselves behind my back, and said, " Why does he put himself into danger amongst stragglers who have no knowledge of the Lord ? " I did not understand it as the effect of malice on account of my simplicity, but that they were wanting in judgment, as I myself testify ; and I did not

quickly comprehend the grace which was then in me, though I now fully know what I in former times have had to be thankful for.

Now, therefore, I have simply insinuated myself into the favour of my brethren and fellow-slaves who trusted in me. Wherefore I have proclaimed and do proclaim, in order to strengthen and confirm your faith, that if ye do imitate me, ye will accomplish greater and better things. This will be my glory; "Because a wise son is the glory of his father."

Ye know and God knows what my conduct and conversation have been amongst you from my youth, in the certain assurance of truth, and in sincerity of heart, I have always kept faith and I will keep it with those people among whom I dwell. God knows that I have not defrauded one of them, nor did it ever enter into my thoughts, on account of God and his Church, both, lest I might excite them to a persecution of us all, and lest through me the name of God might be blasphemed, because it is written,— "Woe to that man through whom the name of the Lord is blasphemed." For though I am unskilled in all things yet I have endeavoured in some measure to guard myself; and those small presents which my Christian brethren, and the virgins of Christ, and the religious women voluntarily gave to me out of their ornaments, and left upon the altar for me, I have even returned again to them. And they were excessively provoked against me, because I did this. But I, in the hope of everlasting life, and that I may to that end warily keep myself in all things, so that infidels may not catch me on any pretext, nor that I may give them cause, even in the smallest matter to defame or disparage the service of my ministry; but, perchance, when I have baptized so many thousand men, I may have expected even the half of a scrupulum\* from some one of them, tell it to me and I will restore it to you: or when the Lord ordained clergy by means of my ministry, I dispensed the rite amongst them gratis. If I have demanded from any one of them even the price of my shoe, tell me: declare it to me and I will restore it to you.

I would rather spend myself for you, if any one would make use of me: and I travel amongst you and everywhere on your

\* "The half of a scrupulum."—The mention of this coin by St. Patrick is very suggestive. Scrupulum or scriptulum was a Roman *measure of weight*; whilst "the half of a scrupulum" was an "obolus," a well-known *Greek coin*.

account, in many dangers, even to the most remote places beyond which no one has ever been, and whither no person has ever come who could baptize, or who could ordain clergy, or confirm people: the Lord granting it, I have with great diligence and very much pleasure brought all those things into operation\* for your salvation. Meanwhile I made presents to the kings, beside that which I gave as hire to their sons who escorted me, nevertheless, they seized me and my companions, and at that time they eagerly desired to slay me, but my time had not yet come: and they robbed us of everything whatsoever they found with us, and myself they bound with fetters of iron; and on the fourteenth day the Lord delivered me out of their power, and whatever belonged to us was restored to us, by the help of God and of those needful friends whom we had provided beforehand. But you well know how much I expended upon those who acted as judges through all those regions which I more frequently visited. I am certain that I have distributed among them not less than the price of fifteen men, so that you might enjoy my company; nor does it grieve me neither do I think that what I have already spent and may hereafter spend is enough, so that I may always rejoice over you before God. The Lord is mighty, may he grant that I may henceforward spend myself for your souls. Behold I call God as witness for my soul, that I do not lie, neither have I written to you for the purpose of giving an opportunity for flattery, nor of gratifying an inordinate desire for praise, as I have not wished for honour from you. For sufficient for me is that honour which is not seen of men, but is felt in the heart, as faithful is He who hath promised and who never lies. For I see that even now in this world I am exalted above measure by the Lord. And I was not worthy, nor

\* The word used here by St. Patrick is more comprehensive than I have rendered it in the translation—"omnia *generavi*"—literally, "I have begotten all these things." If he came to Ireland in the year 432, at a time when, as it is acknowledged by all parties, the Irish people were, and had been for a long period of time, partly Christianised, and if he only assisted, no matter how successfully, in carrying forward that work, how is it possible that he could have thus expressed himself? Even supposing for a moment that he was capable of such an act, though the supposition is utterly repugnant to his character, how would he have dared to tell the Irish people, at a time when the facts were well known, that Christianity, and Christian practices and observances in Ireland all had their origin in him, and that he was in fact *the father of it* there, if such had not been the case?

did I deserve that he should do this for me, since I most certainly know that poverty and misfortune are better for me than riches and pleasures. For even Christ the Lord for our sake became poor.

But neither do I, though I may have wished for riches, when I have them not, deem myself miserable and unhappy, because I live in scorn of the daily risk of being murdered, or entrapped, or reduced to slavery, or the want of everything. But I fear none of these things, by reason of the promise of heaven, because I have cast myself into the hands of God Almighty who rules everywhere, as saith the prophet—"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." Behold I now commend my soul to God who is alone to be relied on, for whom I fill the office of an ambassador in my unworthiness. But, because he accepts not the person of any, and hath chosen me for this office that I might be one of the least of his ministers: "What shall I render to him for all his benefits toward me?" But what shall I say or what shall I promise to my Lord? For I have nothing except what he hath given to me: but I will search my heart and my reins, because I very much, nay, excessively desire, and am ready if it please him that he should give me to drink of his cup, as he hath granted to others who loved him.

Therefore I have had the good fortune through my God, that I should never abandon his people whom I have acquired in the extremities of the earth. I pray to God that he may enable me to persevere, and may vouchsafe that I render faithful witness to Him, even to my departure from this life, on account of my God. And if I have ever imitated anything good on account of my God whom I love, I beseech him that he grant to me, that I may, along with those proselytes and prisoners for his name's sake, pour out my blood, though I should even be deprived of burial, and my wretched corpse should be torn limb from limb by dogs, or by wild beasts, or birds of the air should eat it. I most certainly believe, that if this had happened to me, I would have gained both my soul and my body; because without any doubt in that day we shall rise in the brightness of the sun, that is, in the glory of Christ Jesus our Redeemer, Son of the living God, co-heirs with Christ, and conformed to his future likeness, since by Him, and through Him, and in Him, we are to reign. For that's our sun, which we see, and which, by the providence of God, rise,

daily for our comfort, shall never reign, nor shall his splendour endure, but even all who worship him, shall fall with misery and distress into the place of punishment. We, on the contrary, believe in, and worship, the true Sun, Christ, who will never die, neither shall he who does His will, but shall endure for ever, even as Christ shall endure for ever, who reigns with God the Father Almighty, and with the Holy Ghost, from all eternity, and now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Behold I will again and again set before you briefly the sum of my confession. I testify in truth and in the joy of my heart, before God, and his holy angels, that I never had any other motive, except the Gospel and His promises why I should ever return to that nation from whom I had formerly with difficulty made my escape.

But, I beseech all who fear and believe in God, and whosoever shall deign to look into or to receive this letter, which Patrick the sinner, (and indeed unlearned) wrote in Ireland, that no person shall ever say, if I may have pointed out and proved even some trifling thing, according to the good pleasure of God, that it was only my ignorance : but rather conclude, and believe most assuredly, that it was the gift of God. And this is my Confession before I shall die.





## ST. PATRICK'S EPISTLE TO COROTICUS.

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**P**ATRICK, a sinner, and indeed unlearned, acknowledge that I have been appointed a Bishop in Ireland. I most certainly believe that it is the gift of God that I am what I am. And so I dwell amongst barbarians a proselyte and an exile, for the love of God. He is my witness that it is so: it is not my wish to utter so many harsh and severe things, but I am constrained by my zeal for God and for the truth of Christ, which stimulated me through a love of my neighbours and sons, for whom I have given up my country and parents, and even my life itself to death, if I be worthy. I have vowed to my God to teach the nations, though I am despised by those to whom I have, with my own hand, composed and written these words, to be given and delivered to the soldiers, to be sent to Coroticus, I do not say to my fellow-citizens, nor to fellow-citizens of pious Romans, but to fellow-citizens of the Devils, through their evil deeds, and their hostile practices. They abide in death fit companions of the apostate Scots and Picts, bloodthirsty men ever ready to ensanguine themselves with the blood of innocent Christians, whom in innumerable numbers I have begotten in God, and confirmed in Christ, and who were, on the day following that on which the chrism of a neophyte in a white robe glowed on their foreheads, cruelly slaughtered and slain with the sword by the above-mentioned persons. And I sent a letter by a holy presbyter, whom I have taught from his infancy, along with other clergymen, begging that they would grant to us some part of the booty, or of the baptized captives whom they had taken, but they made sport of them. Therefore, I know not whom I should most grieve for, whether for those who were slain or for those whom they took captives, or for those whom the Devil grievously ensnared into the everlasting pains of hell,

where they shall be disposed of in like manner with him. Because he who caused their sin is a slave, and is called the son of the Devil.

Wherefore, let every man who fears God know that they are estranged from me, and from Christ my Lord, for whom I fill the office of an ambassador, who are parricides, fratricides, ravens wolves, "Devouring the Lord's people like bread," as he saith, "Lord, the wicked have made void thy law;" where in these latter times Ireland has been exceedingly well and prosperously planted and instructed, under the favour of God. I do not usurp anything. I have a part with those whom He hath called, and pre-ordained to preach the Gospel, under no small persecutions, even to the extremity of the earth. Yet the enemy hath acted invidiously towards me through the tyranny of Coroticus, who fears not God, nor his priests whom He hath chosen, and hath committed to them the superlative, divine, sublime power, that "whomsoever they should bind on earth, should be bound in heaven." Whence, therefore, I beseech you who are most eminent for piety, and humble in heart, that it be not permitted to any one to be flattered by these men, nor to take meat nor drink with them, nor to receive their alms, until they make satisfaction to God for the tears which they so cruelly caused to be shed by us, and liberate the servants of God and the baptized handmaidens of Christ, for whom He was crucified and died. "The Most High rejects the offerings of the unjust: he who offers a sacrifice from the substance of the poor is like one who offers a son as a victim in the sight of his father." "Riches," saith he, "which the unjust man shall collect, shall be vomited from his belly; the angel of death drags him off. He shall be punished with the fury of dragons, and the tongue of the adder shall slay him, and fire inextinguishable shall devour him." And hence, "Woe to those who fill themselves with things which are not their own;" or, "What does it profit a man if he may gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul."

It were a long task to discuss or make known one by one, or to pick out through the whole law, testimonies against such cupidity. Avarice is a mortal crime. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods." "Thou shalt not kill." A homicide cannot be with Christ. "He who hateth his brother, is a murderer," or, "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." How much more guilty is he who hath defiled his hands with the blood of the sons of God, whom



he hath lately acquired in the uttermost parts of the earth, through our humble exhortations ?

Whether did I come to Ireland without God, or according to the flesh ? Who compelled me, constrained by the Spirit, that I should give up all intercourse with my kindred ? Do I not exercise a pious mercy towards that nation which formerly took me captive, and destroyed the menservants and maidservants of my father's house ? I was of noble birth, according to the flesh, my father being a Decurio. For I bartered my nobility. I do not blush on that account, neither do I regret it, as I did it for the benefit of others. In short, I am a slave in Christ Jesus our Lord, though my relatives, for that reason, shun my acquaintance. "A prophet hath no honour in his own country." Perhaps we are not of the same fold, neither have we one God and Father : as He saith, "He that is not with me, is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth." Is it not agreed that, "one pulleth down, and another buildeth." I seek not for my own. No thanks to me. But God hath implanted in my heart the anxious desire that I should be one of the hunters, or fishers, who, as God formerly proclaimed, should appear in the last days. Am I envied ? What shall I do, Lord ? I am greatly despised. Lo, thy sheep are torn in pieces around me, and plundered by these aforesaid marauders, under the command of Coroticus, who hath, with hostile purpose (the betrayer of Christians is far from the love of God), delivered them into the hands of the Scots and Picts. Ravening wolves have scattered the flock of the Lord, which, by the greatest diligence, was most prosperously increasing in Ireland; the sons of the Scots, and the daughters of chieftains, are monks, and virgins of Christ ; I cannot enumerate them. Wherefore, "The oppression of the just is not pleasing to thee, neither in this world, nor will it be in the regions below." Who of the saints would not shudder at the thought of joining in amusements or sharing in feasts with such men ? From the spoils of dead Christians they have filled their houses ; they live by rapine. The wretches know not the poison, the deadly food which they present to their friends and children : as Eve understood not that she offered death to her husband ; so are all they who do wickedly ; they labour to make death an everlasting punishment.

It is the custom of the Roman and Gallic Christians to send trustworthy pious persons to the Franks and other nations, with many thousand "solidi," for the purpose of redeeming baptized captives. You who so often slay them, and sell them to a foreign nation ignorant of God; you deliver the members of Christ, as it were, into a den of wolves. What hope have you in God? or who agrees with you? or who addresses you with words of commendation? God will be the Judge; for it is written, "Not only those who do evil, but also those who consent to it, shall be damned." I know not what I can say, or what I can speak more concerning the deceased sons of God, whom the sword has with excessive cruelty slain. For it is written, "Weep with those that weep," and again, "Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it."

Wherefore the Church laments for, and bewails her sons and her daughters, whom the sword has not as yet slain, but who are carried away and transported to a distant part of the earth, where sin has manifestly a stronger hold, and where it shamelessly abounds. There free-born Christian men are sold and reduced to slavery among the most abandoned, the most wicked, and apostate Picts, Therefore, with sorrow and grief I will cry aloud, Oh, my most beautiful and well-beloved brethren, and sons whom I have begotten in Christ (I am unable to number them), what am I to do for you? I am not thought worthy to relieve you either by the help of God, or that of man. The iniquity of the unjust has prevailed over us. We are regarded as strangers. Perhaps they do not believe, that we partake of one baptism, or that, we have one God and Father. They think it an indignity that we have been born in Ireland; as he saith, "Have ye not one God? Why do ye forsake each one his neighbour?" Therefore, I grieve for you, I grieve for you, Oh, most dear to me. But, on the other hand, I rejoice within myself, that my labour has not been for nothing, and that my journey has not been in vain, but that it has got hold of a crime so horrible and unutterable. I thank God, ye who believe and have been baptized, withdrawing from the things of this world, have begun (I perceive) to journey towards Paradise, "Where there shall be no night, and where there shall be no more death, nor sorrow," but, "ye shall exult like young bulls loosed from their bonds, and ye shall tread down the

wicked, for they shall be ashes under your feet." For ye shall reign with the Apostles, and Prophets, and shall, with the martyrs obtain the everlasting kingdom; as He testifies, for He saith, "They shall come from the East and West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven,"—"for without are dogs, and sorcerers, and murderers, and liars, and perjurers," whose portion is in the lake of everlasting fire. Not without cause does the apostle say, "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the impious transgressor of the law appear?" Where then will Coroticus with his most wicked rebels against Christ find themselves (when rewards are being distributed among poor baptized women) on account of his miserable temporal kingdom, which shall surely pass away in a moment, like a cloud, or smoke which is scattered by the wind. So shall injurious sinners perish before the face of the Lord; but the just shall feast in great harmony with Christ: they shall judge the nations, and shall rule over unjust kings for ever and ever. Amen.

I testify before God and his angels that it shall be so, as he hath intimated to my ignorance; these are not my words, but the words of God, and of the Apostles and Prophets (which I have set forth in Latin), who never lied—"He that hath believed shall be saved, but he that hath not believed shall be damned." God hath said it. I earnestly entreat that whosoever is a servant of God, that he be a ready bearer of this letter, and that he by no means be drawn aside by anybody, but that he rather see that it be read before all the people, and in the presence of Coroticus himself, that if God inspire them, the murderers may some time or other return to God, and may, though late, repent for what they have so wickedly done against the brethren of the Lord, and may liberate the baptized captive women whom they have formerly taken, so that they may deserve of God to live, and that they may be made whole here and for ever. Peace be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. Amen.





## CONFESSIO S. PATRICII DE VITA ET CONVERSATIONE SUA.

**E**GO Patricius peccator rusticissimus, et minimus omnium fidelium, et contemptibilissimus apud plurimos, patrem habui Calpornium Diaconem, filium quondam Potii Presbyteri: qui tuitur vico Benaven Tabernæ villam enim (Enon) prope habuit ubi ego in capturam decidi. Anorum eram tunc fere sedecim. Deum enim verum ignorabam; et Hyberione adductus sum in captivitate cum tot millibus hominum, secundum merita nostra: quia a Deo recessimus, et præcepta ejus non custodivimus, ac sacerdotibus nostris inobedientes fuimus, qui nostram salutem admonebant: et Dominus induxit super nos iram indignationis suæ, et dispersit nos in gentibus multis, etiam usque ad ultimum terræ, ubi nunc parvitas mea videtur esse inter alienigenas. Et ubi Dominus aperuit sensum incredulitatis cordis mei, ut vel sero rememorarem delicta mea, et ut me converterem ex toto corde ad Dominum meum, qui respexit humilitatem meam, et misertus adolescentiæ et ignorantiae meæ, custodivit me, antequam scirem eum, et antequam saperem vel distinguerem inter bonum et malum, et monuit me, et consolatus est me ut pater filium.

Unde ego quidem tacere non possum, neque expedit tanta beneficia, et tantam gratiam quam mihi Dominus præstare dignatus est in terra captivitatis meæ: quia hæc est retributio nostra, ut post correptionem vel agnitionem Dei exaltaremur, et confiteremur mirabilia ejus coram omni natione, quæ sub cælo est. Non enim est alius Deus, nec unquam fuit, nec ante, nec erit post hunc, præter Dominum Patrem ingentum, sine principio, a quo est omne principium: per ipsum quippe facta sunt omnia visibilia et invisibilia [qui Filium sibi consubstantialem genuit] hominem factum, et victa morte in cælis ad Patrem receptum. Et dedit illi omnem potestatem super omne nomen cælestium, terrestrium et inferorum, ut omnis lingua confiteatur, quia Dominus Jesus Christus in

gloria est Dei Patris : quem credimus, et expectamus adventum ipsius, mox futurum iudicem vivorum atque mortuorum : qui reddet unicuique secundum facta sua : et infudit in nobis abunde Spiritus Sancti donum, et pignus immortalitatis. Qui facit credentes ac obedientes, ut sint filii Dei Patris quem confitemur, et unum Deum adoramus in Trinitate Sacrosancti nominis. Ipse enim dixit per prophetam : "Invocabis me in die tribulationis tuæ, et liberabo te, et magnificabis me." Et iterum inquit : "Opera autem Dei revelare, et confiteri, honorificum est."

Tamen, etsi in multis imperfectus sum, opto fratribus et cognatis meis scire qualitatem meam, et ut possint perspicere votum animæ meæ. Non enim ignoro testimonium Domini mei, qui in Psalmo testatur : "Perdes omnes qui loquuntur mendacium." Et iterum : "Os, quod mentitur, occidit animam." Et idem Dominus in Evangelio inquit : "Verbum otiosum, quod locuti fuerint homines, reddent pro eo rationem in die iudicii." Unde ego deberem vehementer cum timore et tremore metuere hanc sententiam in die illa, ubi nemo poterit se subtrahere, vel abscondere, sed omnes omnino reddituri sumus rationem etiam minimorum peccatorum nostrorum ante tribunal Domini nostri Jesu Christi.

Quapropter olim cogitavi scribere, sed usque nunc hæsitavi : timui enim ne inciderem in linguam hominum : quia non legi, sicut ceteri, qui optime sacris litteris sunt imbuti, et studium suum ex infantia nunquam mutaverunt, sed magis ad perfectum semper addiderunt : nam sermo et lingua nostra translata est in linguam alienam.

Sed facile potest probari ex saliva scripturæ meæ, qualiter ego sum in sermonibus instructus, atque eruditus; quia inquit sapiens; "Per linguam dignoscitur sensus et scientia et doctrina veritatis." Sed prodest excusatio juxta veritatem, præsertim cum præsumptione? ut modo ipse appeto in senectute mea, quod in juventute non comparavi. Obstiterunt enim peccata mea, ut confirmarem quod ante non perlegeram. Sed quis mihi credit? Et si dixero, quod ante præfatus sum, adolescens, imo pene puer in verbis capturam dedi, antequam scirem quid appetere, vel quid vitare debueram. Unde ego hodie erubesco, et vehementer pertimesco palam denudare imperitiam meam, quia diserti brevitate sermonis explicare non possum, sicut spiritus gestit, et animus, et sensus monstrat, et affectus. Sed si ita mihi datum fuisset, sicut et ceteris; verumtamen non silerem propter retributionem. Et, si forte

videtur apud aliquantos me in hoc præponere cum mea inscientia et tardiori lingua: scriptum est enim: "Linguae balbutientes velociter loqui discent pacem:" quanto magis nos appetere debemus, qui sumus epistola Christi usque ad ultimum terræ; etsi non diserta, sed e—scripta in cordibus vestris, "non atramento, sed Spiritu Dei vivi."

"Rusticatio ab Altissimo creata est," teste eodem Spiritu Dei vivi: unde ego primum rusticus, profuga, indoctus: qui scilicet nescit in posterum prævidere. Sed illud certissime quia utique priusquam humiliarer, ego eram velut lapis, qui jacet in luto profundo; et venit qui potens est, et in sua misericordia sustulit me, et quidem scilicet sursum allevavit, et collocavit me in summo pariete. Et inde forte debueram exclamare ad retribuendum quoque aliquid Domino, pro tantis beneficiis ejus, hic et in æternum, quæ mens humana æstimare non potest. Unde autem? Admiramini itaque magni et pusilli, qui timetis Dominum: et vos domini ignari, rhetorici: audite ergo, et scrutamini, quis me stultum excitavit de medio eorum, qui videntur sapientes esse, et legisperiti, et potentes in sermone, et in omni re, Et me quidem detestabilem hujus mundi præ ceteris inspiravit, etsi talis essem; dummodo ut cum metu et reverentia, et sine querela, fideliter prodessem genti, ad quam charitas Christi transtulit et donavit me in vita mea, si dignus fuero: denique ut cum omni humilitate et veraciter deservirem illi in mensura.

Itaque quæ fidei Trinitatis sunt, oportet distinguere, et sine reprehensione periculi notum facere donum Dei, et consolationem æternam, ac sine timore fiducialiter Dei nomen ubique expandere, et etiam post obitum meum relinquere fratribus, et filiis meis, quos ego in Domino baptizavi, tot millia hominum; etsi non eram dignus; neque talis, ut hoc Dominus servo suo concederet; et post ærumnas tantæ molis, post captivitatem, post annos multos in gente illa tantam gratiam donaret, quod aliquando ego in juventute mea nunquam speravi, neque cogitavi. Sed postquam Hyberione deveneram, quotidie pecora pascebam, et frequens in die orabam, magisque ac magis accedebat amor Dei, et timor illius et fides augebatur, et spiritus augebatur, ut in die una usque ad centum orationes (facerem), et in nocte prope similiter: et etiam in silvis et monte manebam, et ante lucem excitabar ad orationem per nivem, per gelu, per pluviam, et nihil mali sentiebam, neque ulla pigritia erat in me, sicut modo video: quia tunc in me spiritus

fervebat. Et ibi scilicet quadam nocte in somno audivi vocem dicentem mihi: "Bene jejunas, cito iturus ad patriam tuam." Et iterum post paullulum tempus responsum audivi dicens mihi: "Ecce navis tua parata est." Et non erat prope, sed forte aberat ducenta millia passus, et ibi nunquam fueram, nec ibi quemquam notum de hominibus habebam.

Et deinde postmodum conversus sum in fugam: et intermissi hominem cum quo fueram annis sex: et in virtute Dei, qui viam meam dirigebat, veni ad Benum: et nihil metuebam, donec perveni ad navem illam. Et mox cum perveni ad eam, profecta est de loco suo, et locutus sum ut haberem unde navigare. Gubernatori autem displicuit, et acriter cum indignatione respondit: "Nequaquam tu nobiscum appetas ire." Et cum hæc audissem, separavi me ab illis, ut venirem ad tuguriolum ubi hospitabam: et in itinere cœpi orare: et antequam orationem consummare, audivi unum ex illis fortiter exclamare post me: "Veni cito, quia vocant te homines isti." et statim ad illos reversus sum; et cœperunt mihi dicere: "veni, quia ex fide reperimus te, et fac nobiscum amicitiam quomodo volueris." Et in illa die debui surgere in navem eorum propter Deum. Verumtamen (non) speravi ab illis ut mihi dicerent: "Veni in fide Christi," quia gentiles erant; et hoc obtinui cum illis; et protinus navigavimus.

Et post triduum terram cepimus; et viginti et septem dies per desertum iter fecimus. Cibus autem et potus defecit nobis, et fames invaluit super nos. Et alia die cœpit Gubernator mihi dicere: "Quid est, Christiane? Tu dicis: Deus tuus magnus et omnipotens est: quare ergo non potes pro nobis orare? Ora pro nobis, quia fame periclitamur: difficile est enim ut hominem aliquem unquam videamus." Ego vero evidenter dixi illis: "convertimini ex toto corde vestro ad Dominum Deum meum; quia nihil est impossibile illi, ut hodie mittat nobis cibum in viam nostram, usque dum satiemini, quia ubique abundat illi." Adjuvante ergo Deo, ita factum est. Ecce grex porcorum in via veniebat ante oculos nostros, et multos ex illis interfecerunt: et ibi duas noctes manserunt bene refecti. Et canes eorum revelati sunt, quia multi ex illis defecerunt, et secus viam semivivi derelicti sunt. Et post hoc summas gratias egerunt Deo, et ego honorificatus sum sub oculis eorum.

Ex illa autem die cibum abundanter habuerunt: sed etiam mel silvestre invenerunt, et mihi partem obtulerunt, et unus illorum

dixit: "Hoc immolatum est, Deo gratias," exinde nihil gustavi. Eadem vero nocte eram dormiens, et fortiter tentavit me satanas, quod memor ero quamdiu fuero in hoc corpore. Cecidit enim super me velut saxum ingens, et omnium membrorum meorum vires abstulit. Sed unde venit ignoro, ut spiritu Eliam invocarem. Et inter hæc vidi in cælo solem oriri; et dum clamarem, Heliam, Heliam, totis viribus meis; ecce splendor solis illius, et statim discussit a me omnem gravedinem. Et credo quod a Christo meo subventus sum, et spiritus ejus jam tunc clamavit pro me: spero autem quod sic erit in die pressuræ meæ, sicut in Evangelio Dominus testatur: "In illa die, inquit, non vos estis qui loquimini, sed spiritus Patris vestri, qui loquitur in vobis." In itinere autem nostro providit nobis cibum et ignem, et siccitatem quotidie, donec quarto decimo die prævenimus homines: sicut superius insinuavi, viginti et octo dies per desertum iter fecimus, et ea nocte quæ prævivimus omnes de cibo nihil habuimus.

Et iterum post annos (non) multos adhuc in capturam decidi: nocte vero prima mansi cum illis. Responsum autem divinum audiui, dicens mihi: "Duos menses eris cum illis:" quod ita factum est. Nocte igitur illa sexagesima liberavit me Dominus de manibus eorum. Iterum post paucos annos in Britannia eram cum parentibus meis, qui me ut filium exceperunt, et ex fide rogaverunt me, ut vel modo post tantas tribulationes, quas ego pertuli, nunquam ab illis discederem. Et ibi scilicet vidi in visu de nocte virum venientem quasi de *Hiberione*, Victricius nomine, cum epistolis innumerabilibus; et dedit mihi unam ex illis; et lego principium epistolæ continenter: *Vox Hyberionarum*. Et cum recitabam initium epistolæ, putabam ipso momento audire vocem ipsorum, qui erant juxta sylvam *Focluti*, quæ est prope mare occidentale. Et sic exclamaverunt quasi ex uno ore; "Rogamus te, sancte puer, venias, et adhuc ambules inter nos." Et valde compunctus sum corde, et amplius non potui legere: et sic expegefactus sum. Deo gratias, quia post annos plurimos præstitit illis Dominus secundum clamorem eorum.

Et alia nocte, nescio, Deus scit; in me, an juxta me, verbis peritissimis audiebam quosdam ex spiritu psallentes intra me, et nesciebam qui essent, quos ego audiui, et non potui intelligere, nisi ad postremum orationis, sic affatus est: "Qui dedit pro te animam suam." Et sic evigilavi. Et iterum audiui in me ipsum orantem: et erat quasi intra corpus meum: et audiui super me, hoc est,



super interiorem hominem, et ibi fortiter orabat (cum) gemitibus. Et inter hæc stupebam, et admirabar, et cogitabam quis esset qui oraret in me? Sed ad postremum orationis dixit se esse spiritum: et recordatus sum Apostoli dicentis: "Spiritus adjuvat infirmitem orationis nostræ: nam quid oremus, nescimus: sed ipse Spiritus postulat pro nobis gemitibus inenarrabilibus, quæ verbis exprimere non possum." Et iterum: "Dominus advocatus est noster et ipse postulat pro nobis." Et quando tentatus sum ab aliquantibus senioribus meis, qui venerunt, ob peccata mea, contra laboriosum Episcopatum meum, nonnumquam in illo die fortiter impulsus sum, ut caderem hic et in æternum. Sed Dominus pepercit proselyto et peregrino propter nomen suum, et mihi benigne valde subvenit in hac conculcatione, quod in labem et opprobrium non male deveni. Deum oro, ut non illis in peccatum reputetur occasio. Nam post annos triginta invenerunt me adversus verbum quod confessus fueram antequam essem diaconus.

Propter anxietatem mœsto animo insinuavi amicissimo meo quæ in pueritia mea una die gesseram, imo in una hora, quia necdum prævalebam. Nescio, Deus scit, si habebam tunc annos quindecim, et Deum unum non credebam ab infantia mea; sed in morte et in incredulitate mansi, donec valde castigatus sum: et in veritate humiliatus sum a fame et nuditate, et quotidie contra Hyberionem non sponte pergebam, donec prope deficiebam. Sed hoc potius mihi bene fuit: quia ex hoc emendatus sum a Domino, et aptavit me ut hodie essem quod aliquando longe a me erat, ut ego curas haberem aut satagerem pro salute aliorum, quando etiam de me ipso non cogitabam.

Igitur in illo die quo reprobatus sum a memoratis supradictis, ad noctem illam in visu noctis vidi scriptum contra faciem meam, sine honore. Et inter hæc audiavi responsum divinum dicens mihi: "Male vidimus faciem designati nudato nomine." Nec sic prædixit: Male vidisti; sed: Male vidimus; quasi ibi se junxit, sicut dixit: "Qui vos tangit, tangit pupillam oculi mei." Idcirco gratias ago ei, qui me in omnibus confortavit, ut non me impediret a protectione mea, quam statueram, et de meo quoque opere, quod a Christo meo didiceram: sed magis ex eo sensi in me virtutem non parvam, et fides mea probata est coram Deo et hominibus.

Unde audenter dico, non me reprehendit conscientia mea. Testem Deum habeo, quia non sum mentitus in sermonibus quos retuli: sed magis doleo pro amicissimo meo, cur tale meruimus

habere responsum, cui ego credidi etiam animam meam. Et comperi ab aliquantis fratribus meis ante defensionem illam, quod ego non interfui, nec in Britannii eram, nec a me orietur, ut et ille in mea absentia pulsetur pro me. Ipse ore suo dixerat: "Ecce promovendus es tu ad gradum Episcopatus," quo non eram dignus. Sed unde venit illi postmodum ut coram cunctis bonis et malis in me publice dehonestaret, quod ante sponte et lætus indulserat? Est Dominus qui major omnibus est. Satis dico. Sed tamen non debeo abscondere donum Dei, quod largitus est in terra captivitatis meæ. Quia tunc fortiter inquisivi illum, et ibi inveni eum, et servavit me ab omnibus iniquitatibus propter inhabitantem Spiritum ejus, qui operatus est usque in hunc diem in me. Novit autem Dominus, si ab homine ista audissem, forsitan tacuissem propter charitatem Christi.

Unde ego indefessam gratiam ago Deo meo, qui me fidelem servavit in die tentationis meæ; ita ut hodie confidenter offeram illi sacrificium, et velut hostiam viventem animam meam consecro Domino meo, qui me servavit ab omnibus angustiis meis, ut ei dicam: "quis ego sum, Domine? vel quæ est invocatio mea, qui mihi tantam divinitatem denudasti? Ita ut hodie exaltarem et magnificarem nomen tuum in quocumque loco fuero; nec tantum in secundis, sed etiam in pressuris: ut quidquid mihi evenirit, sive bonum, sive malum, æqualiter debeam suscipere, et Deo gratias semper agere, qui mihi ostendit, ut indubitabilem eum crederem sine fine, et qui me audierit ut et ego in novissimis diebus hoc opus tam pium et tam mirificum auderem aggredi; ita ut imitarer illos, quos Dominus jam olim prædixerat prænuntiatiuros Evangelium suum in testimonium omnibus gentibus ante finem mundi." Quod sicut vidimus, ita suppletum est. Ecce testes sumus, quia Evangelium prædicatum est ubique ubi nemo ultra est.

Longum est autem totum per singula narrare laborem meum, vel per partes. Breviter dicam qualiter piissimus Deus de servitute sæpe (me) liberavit, ex duodecim periculis, quibus periclitata est anima mea; præter insidias multas, et quæ verbis exprimere non valeo, ne injuriam legentibus faciam. Sed Dominum auctorem habeo, qui novit omnia etiam antequam fiant, ut me pauperculum et pusillum responsum divinum creberrime admoneret. Unde mihi hæc sapientia, quæ in me non erat, qui nec numerum deorum noveram, neque Deum sapiebam? Unde mihi postmodum tam magnum et salubre donum Dei agnoscere et diligere, ut patriam et

parentes amitterem, et munera multa, (quæ) mihi offerebantur cum fletu et lacrymis? Et offendi illic contra votum aliquantos de senioribus meis. Sed gubernante Deo, nullo modo consensi neque acquievi illis: non ego, sed Dei gratia, quæ vicit in me, et restitit illis omnibus, quatenus venirem ad Ibernas gentes Evangelium prædicare, et ab incredulis injurias perferre, ut audirem opprobrium peregrinationis meæ, et persecutiones multas usque ad vincula, et ut darem me et ingenuitatem meam pro utilitate aliorum.

Et si dignus fuero, promptus sum ut etiam animam meam incunctanter et libentissime (ponam) pro nomine ejus; et illi opto impendere eam usque ad mortem, si Dominus indulgeret. Quia valde debitor sum Deo, qui mihi tantam gratiam donavit, ut populi multi per me in Domino renascantur, et postmodum consummarentur. Et ut clerici ubique illis ordinarentur ad plebem nuper venientem ad credulitatem, quam sumpsit Dominus ab extremis terræ, et dicent: "Falsa comparaverunt patres nostri sibi idola, et non est utilitas in eis." Et iterum: "Posui te in lucem gentibus, ut sis salus mea usque ad ultimum terræ." Et ibi volo expectare promissum ipsius, qui utique nunquam fallit, sicut in Evangelio pollicetur: "Venient ab oriente et occidente, et recumbent cum Abraham et Isaac et Jacob:" sicut credimus ab omni mundo venturi.

Idcirco oportet quidem bene et diligenter piscari, sicut Dominus præmonet dicens: "Venite post me, faciam vos fieri piscatores hominum." Et iterum dicit per Prophetas: "Ecce ego mitto piscatores et venatores multos, dicit Dominus," &c. Unde oportuit valde retia nostra tendere, ita ut multitudo copiosa et turba Deo caperetur: ut ubique essent clerici qui baptizarent, et exhortarentur populum indigentem et desiderantem: sicut Dominus inquit in Evangelio admonens et dicens: "Euntes ergo docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti: docentes eos servare omnia quaecumque dixero vobis. Et ecce ego vobiscum sum omnibus diebus usque ad consummationem sæculi." Et iterum dicit: "Euntes in mundum universum, prædicate Evangelium omni creaturæ. Qui crediderit, et baptizatus fuerit, salvus erit. Et prædicabitur hoc Evangelium regni in universo mundo in testimonium omnibus gentibus et tunc veniet finis." Et iterum Domini propheta prænuntians, inquit: "Et erit in novissimis diebus, dicit Dominus, effundam de Spiritu meo super

omnem carnem, et prophetabunt filii vestri, et filiae vestrae, et seniores vestri somnia somniabunt. Et quidem super servos meos et ancillas meas in diebus illis effundam de Spiritu meo, et prophetabunt. Et Osee dicit; "Vocabo non plebam meam, plebem meam; et non misericordiam consecutam, misericordiam consecutam: et erit in loco ubi dictum est: Non plebs mea vos, ibi vocabuntur filii Dei vivi."

Unde autem *Hiberione*, qui nunquam notitiam Dei habuerant, nec nisi idola inmundum usque nunc semper coluerunt, quomodo nuper effecta est plebs Domini, et filii Dei nuncupabuntur? Filii Scottorum, et filiae Regulorum monachi et virgines Christi esse videntur. Et etiam una Scotta benedicta, nobilis, pulcherrima, adulta erat, quam ego baptizavi: et post paucos dies una caussa venit ad nos: insinuavit namque nobis responsum accepisse a nuntio Dei, qui monuit eam ut permaneret virgo Christi, et sic Deo proximaret. Deo gratias, sexta ab hac die optime et avidissime arripuit illud, quod etiam omnes virgines Dei similiter faciunt, non voluntate patrum suorum; imo persecutiones patiuntur, et impropria falsa a parentibus suis. Et nihilominus plus augetur numerus, et de genere nostro quæ ibi (Christo) natæ sunt, nescimus numerum earum, præter viduas et continentes. Sed et illæ maxime laborant, quæ servitio detinentur: usque ad terrores et minas assidue perferunt. Sed Dominus gratiam dedit multis ex ancillis suis: nam etsi vetantur, tamen fortiter imitantur.

Unde autem (possem) etsi voluero dimittere illas, et pergere in Britannias, etsi libentissime paratus irem, quasi ad patriam et parentes: et non id solum, sed etiam usque ad Gallias visitarem fratres meos, ut viderem faciem sanctorum Domini mei: scit Dominus quod ego (id) valde optabam. Sed illigatus spiritu (qui mihi protestatur, si hoc fecero, et reum futurum esse designat), timeo perdere laborem, quem inchoavi; et non ego, sed Christus Dominus, qui mihi imperavit ut venirem, essemque cum illis residuum ætatis meæ; si Dominus voluerit, et custodierit me ab omni via mala, ut non peccem coram illo. Sperare autem hoc debueram: sed memetipsum non credo, qui diu fuero in hoc corpore mortis: quia fortis est qui quotidie nititur me a fide et proposita castitate religionis non fictæ (quam servabo) usque in finem vitæ meæ Christo Domino meo: sed caro inimica semper attrahit ad mortem, id est, ad illecebras in infelicitate perfruendas. Et

scio ex parte quod ego vitam perfectam non dedici, sicut et ceteri credentes. Sed confiteor Domino meo, et non erubescō in conspectu ejus, quia non mentior, ex quo cognovi eum in juventute mea, crevit in me amor Dei, et timor ipsius, et usque nunc, favente Domino, fidem servavi.

Rideat autem et insultet qui voluerit, ego non silebo, neque abscondam signa et mirabilia, quæ mihi a Domino monstrata sunt ante multos annos quam fierent, quasi qui novit omnia, etiam ante tempora sæcularia. Unde ego quidem debueram sine cessatione Deo gratias agere, qui sæpe indulsit insipientiæ meæ et negligentiae meæ—Et de loco non in unoquoque, ut non mihi vehementer irasceretur, cui adjutor datus sum, et non cito acquievi, secundum quod mihi ostensum fuerat et Spiritus nihilominus suggerebat. Et misertus est mihi Dominus in millia millium: quia vidit in me quod paratus eram; sed quod nihilo plus sciebam de statu meo quid facerem, quia multi hanc legationem prohibebant, et quidam inter ipsos post tergum meum narrabant et dicebant: “Iste quare se mittit in periculum inter hostes, qui Deum non noverunt?” Non causa malitiæ, sed non sapiebat illis, sicut et ego ipse testor, iter illud propter rusticitatem meam. Et non cito agnovi gratiam, quæ tunc erat in me: nunc mihi sapit quod ante debueram (vocanti Deo parere.)

Nunc ergo simpliciter insinuavi fratribus et conservis meis, qui mihi crediderunt; propter quod prædixi et prædico ad roborandam fidem vestram. Utinam et vos inmitemini majora, et potiora faciatis. Hæc erit gloria mea; quia filius sapiens gloria Patris est. Vos scitis et Deus qualiter conversatus sum inter vos a juventute mea, in fide veritatis et sinceritate cordis, etiam ad gentes illas inter quas habito, ego fidem illis præstiti et præstabo. Deus scit, neminem illorum circumveni, nec cogito, propter Deum, et Ecclesiam ipsius ne excitem illis, et vobis omnibus persecutionem, et ne per me blasphemetur nomen Domini: quia scriptum est: “Væ homini, per quem nomen Domini blasphematur.” Nam etsi imperitus sum in omnibus; tamen conatus sum quippiam servare me, etiam fratribus Christianis, et virginibus Christi, et mulieribus religiosis, quæ mihi ultronea munuscula donabant, et super altare jactabant ex ornamentis suis, et iterum reddebam illis: et adversus me scandalizabantur cur hoc faciebam. Sed ego (id faciebam) propter spem perennitatis, ut me in omnibus caute possem con-

servare: ita ut me in aliquo titulo infideles non carperent, vel etiam ministerium servitutis meæ: nec etiam in minimis, incredulis locum darem, infamare sive detrectare (me paratis.)

Forte autem quando baptizavi tot millia hominum, speraverim ab aliquo illorum vel dimidium scriptulum? Dicite mihi, et reddam vobis. An quando ordinavit ubique Dominus clericos per modicitatem meam (numquid) ministerium gratis distribui illis? Si poposci ab aliquo illorum vel pretium calceamenti mei, dicite mihi et reddam vobis magis. Ego impendi vobis, ut me caperent: et inter vos et ubique pergebam caussa vestra, in multis periculis, etiam usque ad exterarum partes, ubi nemo, ultra erat, et ubi, numquam, aliquis pervenerat qui baptizaret, aut clericos ordinaret, aut populum in fide confirmaret: donante Domino, diligenter ac libentissime pro salute vestra omnia gessi. Interea præmia Regibus dabam, præter quod mercedem dabam filiis ipsorum, qui mecum ambulantes et nihilominus comprehenderunt me nunc cum comitibus meis; ut in illa die avidissime interficerent me. Sed tempus nondum venerat, et omnia quæcumque (habebamus) nobiscum rapuerunt, et me ipsum ferro vinxerunt: et quarto decimo die absolvit me Dominus a potestate eorum, et quidquid nostrum fuit, redditum est nobis propter Deum et necessarios amicos, quos ante providimus.

Vos autem experti estis quanta erogaverim eis, qui indigebant per omnes regiones, quos ego frequentius visitabam. Censeo enim non minus quam pretium quindecim hominum distribui illis. Ita ut me fruamini, et ego vobis semper fruam in Domino (nec me pœnitet, nec satis est mihi) adhuc impendo, et superimpendam, pro animabus vestris. Ecce testem Deum invoco in animam meam, quia non mentior (quod) neque ut fit, caussa adulationis vel avaritiæ scripserim vobis, neque ut honorem sperarem vestrum. Sufficit enim mihi honor, qui non videtur, sed corde creditur: fidelis autem qui promisit, nunquam mentitur. Sed video jam in præsentem sæculo me supra modum exaltatum a Domino: et non eram dignus, neque talis ut mihi hoc præstaret; dum scio certissime quod mihi convenit melius paupertas et calamitas, quam deliciæ et divitiæ. Sed et Christus Dominus pro nobis fuit pauper.

Ego vero miser et infelix, etsi opes voluero jam non habeo, neque me ipsum (dignum) judico, quia quotidie spero aut intercessionem, aut circumveniri, aut redigi in servitutem sine occasione cujuslibet. Sed nihil horum vereor propter promissa cælorum:

quia jactavi meipsum in manus Dei omnipotentis, qui ubique dominatur; sicut Propheta ait: "Jacta cogitatum tuum in Domino, et ipse te enutrit."

Ecce nunc commendo animam meam, fidelissimo Deo meo, pro quo legatione fungor in ignobilitate mea: sed quia personam non accipit, et elegit me ad hoc officium, ut unus essem de suis minimis, minister. "Unde autem retribuam illi pro omnibus quæ retribuit mihi?" Sed quid dicam, aut quid promittam Domino meo? Quia nihil valeo, nisi ipse mihi dederit; sed scrutatur corda et renes, quia satis et nimis cupio, et paratus eram ut donaret mihi bibere calicem, sicut indulsit et ceteris amantibus se. Quapropter non contingat mihi a Domino meo, ut unquam amittam plebem suam, quam acquisivit in ultimis terræ. Oro ergo Deum ut det mihi perseverantiam, et dignetur ut reddam illi (me) testem fidelem usque ad transitum meum propter Deum meum. Et si aliquid boni imitatus sum unquam propter Deum meum, quem diligo; peto illi ut det mihi quatenus cum illis proselytis et captivis pro nomine suo effundam sanguinem meum, etsi ipsa etiam caream sepultura: et miserrime cadaver per singula dividatur; avibus, canibus, aut bestiis ac feris projiciatur, ut comedant illud. Certissime enim reor si mihi hoc curæ sit, lucratus sum animam in corpore meo; quia nulla dubitatione in illa die resurgemus in claritate solis, hoc est, in gloria Jesu Christi, redempti omnes erimus quasi filii Dei, cohæredes Christi, et conformes creaturæ imaginis ipsius. Quoniam ex ipso et per ipsum, et in ipso sunt omnia: ipsi gloria in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

In illo enim regnaturi sumus: nam sol iste, quem videmus, illo jubente, propter nos quotidie oritur: sed nunquam regnabit, neque permanebit splendor ejus; sed et omnes, qui adorant eum, in pœnam miseri male devenient. Nos autem, credimus et adoramus solem verum Jesum Christum, qui nunquam interibit, neque qui fecerit voluntatem suam (interibit), sed manebit in æternum, quomodo Christus manet in æternum, qui regnat cum Deo Patre omnipotente, et Spiritu Sancto ante sæcula, et nunc, et per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen. Ecce iterum atque iterum breviter exponam verba *Confessionis* meæ. Testificor in veritate, et in exultatione coram Deo et sanctis Angelis ejus, quia nunquam habui ullam occasionem, præter Evangelium, et promissa illius, ut unquam redirem ad gentem illam, unde prius evaseram. Sed pre-

cor credentibus et petentibus ac timentibus Deum, quicumque dignatus fuerit inspicere, vel recipere hanc scripturam, quam peccator Patricius, indoctus scilicet, Hiberione conscripsi, ut nemo unquam dicat, quod meæ ignorantiae (fuerit) si aliquid pussillum egi, vel demonstraverim secundum placitum Dei. Sed arbitramini, et verissime credatis, quod Deus fuisset. Atque hæc est confessio mea antequam moriar.







S. PATRICII EPISTOLA AD CHRISTIANOS COROTICI  
TYRANNI SUBDITOS.

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**P**ATRICIUS peccator indoctus, Hiberione constitutus episcopus, certissime reor, a Deo accepi id quod sum. Inter barbaras utique gentes proselytus et perfuga ob amorem Dei. Testis ille est, si ita est. Non quod optabam tam dure et tam aspere aliquid ex ore meo effundere, sed cogor zelo Dei ac veritatis Christi excitatus pro dilectione proximorum atque filiorum pro quibus tradidi patriam, et parentes, et animam meam (quia) usque ad mortem, si dignus sum, vovi Deo meo docere gentes, etsi nunc contemnar a quibusdam. Et manu mea scripsi atque condidi verba ista danda ac tradenda militibus mittenda Corotici, non dico civibus meis, atque civibus sanctorum Romanorum, sed civibus dæmoniorum ob mala opera ipsorum (qui Barbarorum) ritu hostili in morte vivunt, socii Scotorum atque Pictorum apostatarum, quasi sanguine volentes saginari innocentium christianorum, quos ego innumeros Deo genui, atque in Christo confirmavi.

Postera die, qua chrismati Neophyti in veste candida, dum (fides) flagrabat in fronte ipsorum, crudeliter trucidati atque mactati (sunt) gladio a supra dictis. Et misi epistolam cum sancto Presbytero, quem ego ex infantia docui, cum clericis, ut nobis aliquid indulgeretur de praeda, vel de captivis baptizatis, quos ceperunt. (Sed) cachinos fecerunt de illis. Idcirco nescio quid magis lugeam; an qui interfecti vel quos cum eis ceperunt, vel quos graviter zabulusilla queavit, (qui) perenni pœnæ in gehenna pariter cum ipso mancipabuntur. Quia utique qui facit peccatum servus est peccati, et filius diaboli nuncupatur.

Quapropter resciat omnis homo timens Deum, quod a me alieni sunt, et a Christo Deo meo, pro quo legatione fungor, patricidæ et fratricidæ, lupi rapaces "devorantes plebem Domini ut cibum panis," sicut ait: "Iniqui dissipaverunt legem tuam, Domine!" quam in supremis temporibus Hiberione optime et benigne plantaverat atque instruxerat. Favente Deo, non usurpo (aliena: sed) partem habeo cum his, quos vocavit ac prædestinavit Evangelium prædicare in persecutionibus non parvis usque ad extremum terræ: etsi invidet inimicus per tyrannidem Corotici, qui Deum non veretur, nec sacerdotes ejus, quos elegit, et indulsit illis summam divinamque potestatem, "quos ligarent super terram, esse ligatos et in cælis."

Unde ergo quæso plurimum, sancti et humiles corde, adulari talibus non licet, nec cibum, nec potum, sumere cum ipsis, nec eleemosynas ipsorum debent recipi, donec crudeliter effusis lacrymis, pœnitentiam agentes satisfaciant Deo, et liberent servos Dei, et ancillas Christi baptizatas, pro quibus mortuus est et crucifixus. "Dona enim iniquorum, reprobatur Altissimus: et qui offert sacrificium ex substantia pauperis, quasi qui victimat filium in conspectu patris." "Divitiæ, inquit, quas congregavit injuste, evomentur de ventre ejus, angelus mortis trahit illum, ira draconum multabitur, interficiet illum lingua colubri, comedet eum ignis inextinguibilis." Ideoque: "væ qui replent se his quæ non sunt sua." "Et quid prodest homini, si totum mundum lucretur, se autem ipsum perdat, et detrimentum animæ suæ patiat?" Longum est per singula discurrere, vel insinuare per totam legem carptim testimonia de tali cupiditate. Avaritia mortale crimen. "Non concupisces rem proximi tui." "Non occides." Homicida non potest esse cum Christo: "qui enim odit fratrem suum, homicida esse adscribitur." Et: "qui non diligit fratrem suum, manet in morte." Quanto magis reus est, qui manus suas coinquinat in sanguine filiorum Dei, quos nuper conquisivit in ultimis finibus terræ per exhortationem parvitatæ nostræ?

Numquid sine Deo, vel secundum carnem Hiberionem veni? Quis me compulit? Alligatus sum spiritu ut non videam aliquem de cognatione mea. Numquid amo piam misericordiam, quod (sic) ago erga illam gentem, quæ me aliquando cepit? Ingenuus sum secundum carnem; nam Decurione patre nascor. Vendidi autem nobilitatem meam (non erubescor, neque me prænitet) pro

utilitate aliorum. Denique sum in Christo traditus genti exteræ ob gloriam ineffabilem perennis vitæ, quæ est in Christo Jesu Domino nostro; etsi mei non cognoscunt, "Propheta in patria sua honorem non habet." Forte non sumus ex uno patre, neque ex uno ovili? sicut ait Dominus: "Qui non est mecum, contra me est: et qui non congregat mecum, spargit." Non convenit (si) "unus destruit, alter ædificat." Num quæro quæ mea sunt?

Non mea gratia, sed Deus hanc quidem sollicitudinem (dedit) in corde meo, ut essem de venatoribus, sive de piscatoribus, quos Deus olim in novissimis diebus ante prænuntiavit. Invidetur mihi: quid faciam, Domine? Valde despicior. Ecce oves tuæ circa me laniantur, atque deprædantur a supradictis latrunculis, jubente Corotico hoste: mente enim longe est a charitate Dei traditor Christianorum, in manus Scottorum atque Pictorum. Lupi rapaces deglutierunt gregem Domini, qui utique Hiberione cum summa diligentia optime crescebat: et filii Scottorum, ac filiæ Regularum monachi (fiebant) et virgines Christi (quot) enumerare nequeo. "Qui propter injuriam iustorum non te placat, Domine; etiam usque ad inferos non placabit."

Quis sanctorum non horreat jocundare, vel convivium facere cum talibus? De spoliis defunctorum Christianorum repleverunt domos suas: de rapinis vivunt: nesciunt misereri: venenum bibunt; letalem cibum porrigunt ad amicos et filios suos. Sicut Eva non intellexit quod mortem tradidit viro suo; sic sunt omnes qui male agunt: mortem perennem, pœnamque perpetuam operantur.

Consuetudo Romanorum Gallorumque Christianorum, (est) mittunt Presbyteros sanctos (et) idoneos ad Francos et exterarum gentes cum tot millibus solidorum ad redimendum captivos baptizatos. Tu omnes interficis, et vendis illos genti exteræ ignoranti Deum: quasi in lupanar tradis membra Christi. Qualem (ergo) spem habes in Deum?

Qui tecum sentit, aut qui te communicat verbis alienis et adulationi, Deus judicabit. Nescio quid dicam, aut quid loquar amplius de defunctis filiorum Dei, quos gladius supra modum tetigit. Scriptum est enim: "Flere cum flentibus:" et iterum: "si dolet unum membrum, condolent omnia membra." Quapropter Ecclesia plorat et plangit filios et filias suas, quos adhuc nondum gladius hostilis interfecit, sed exportati (sunt) per longa terrarum

spatia. Ut peccatum manifestæ gravetur impudentiæ, impudens ibi habitat, et abundat: ibi venundati ingenui homines Christiani in servitutem redacti sunt, præsertim indignissimorum pessimorumque atque apostatarum Pictorum.

Idcirco cum tristitia et mœrore vociferabor: O speciosissimi, atque amantissimi fratres, et filii, quos in Christo genui, nec enumerare queo, quid faciam vobis? Non sum dignus neque hominibus subvenire. Prævaluit iniquitas iniquorum supra nos. Forte non credunt (quod) unum baptismum percepimus, et unum Deum habemus. Indignum est illis quod de Hibernia nati sumus: sic enim ajunt—Idcirco doleo pro vobis, doleo charissimi mei: sed iterum gaudeo intra meipsum, quia non gratis laboravi, et peregrinatio mea in vanum non fuit: et contigit scelus illo in tempore horrendum et ineffabile. Deo gratias, credentes et baptizati de sæculo recessistis ad paradysum. Cerno: vos migrare cœpistis “ubi nox non erit, neque luctus, neque mors erit amplius:” “sed exultabitis sicut vituli resoluti, et conculcabitis iniquos, et erunt cinis sub pedibus vestris.”

Vos ergo regnabitis cum Apostolis et Prophetis atque Martyribus, atque æterna regna capietis; sicut ipse testatur inquiens: “Venient ab oriente et occidente, et recumbent cum Abraham, et Isaac et Jacob in regno cœlorum.” “Foris canes, et venefici, et homicidæ, et mendaces et perjuri:” “pars eorum in stagno ignis æterni.” Non enim in vanum ait Apostolus: “Ubi justus vix salvus erit, peccator, et impius, et transgressor legis ubi se recognoscet?” Ubi erit Coroticus cum suis sceleratissimis rebellatoribus Christi? Ubi se videbunt qui mulierculas baptizatas, et prædia orphanorum spurcissimis satellitibus suis distribuunt ob miserum regnum temporale, quod utique in momento transit sicut nubes vel fumus, qui utique vento dispergitur. Ita peccatores et fraudulentum a facie Domini peribunt: justi autem epulabuntur in magna constantia cum Christo, et judicabunt nationes, et regibus iniquis dominabuntur in secula seculorum. Amen.

Testificor coram Deo et Angelis sanctis suis, quod ita erit, sicut intimavit imperitia mea. Non mea verba sunt ista, sed Dei, et Apostolorum, atque Prophetarum qui nunquam mentiti sunt: quæ ego in latinum transtuli. “Et qui crediderint, salvi erunt: qui vero non crediderint, condemnabitur.” Deus locutus est. Quæso plurimum ut quicumque famulus Dei promptus fuerit, ut sit gerulus

litterarum harum, ut nequaquam subtrahantur a nemine, sed magis potius legantur coram cunctis plebibus, et præsente ipso Corotico. Quad si Deus inspiret illos, ut quandoque de eo respiscant, ita ut vel sero pœniteant quod tam impie gesserunt. Homicidæ erga fratres Domini fuerunt : sed pœniteant, et liberent captivas baptizatas, quas antea ceperunt ; ita ut mereantur Deo vivere, et sani efficiantur hic et in æternum. Pax Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. Amen.

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NOTE.—There are now in existence four ancient MS. copies of St. Patrick's Confession, and three of his Epistle to Coroticus. Of the copies of his Confession, one is in the Book of Armagh, which is now, by the gift of our late Primate, in the library of Trinity College, Dublin ; another, called the Cottonian copy, from its former owner, Sir Robert Cotton, is now in the library of the British Museum ; and two others, preserved in the library of the Cathedral of Salisbury, are now in the Bodleian library at Oxford. Of the three ancient MS. copies of his Epistle to Coroticus, one called the Cottonian copy, which obtained that name in the same way as did the Confession, is preserved along with it in the British Museum ; and the other two, which had been preserved along with the copies of the Confession at Salisbury, are now to be found with them in the Bodleian library. Another ancient copy of the Confession and one of the Epistle were preserved in the celebrated Abbey of St. Vaast at Arras, in the province of Artois, in France, whence the Bollandists, adopting them as being in their estimation the most correct version, took their copies. The Abbey of St. Vaast was demolished at the time of the French Revolution, when its library was destroyed, and all its contents are supposed to have perished. The copies of the Confession and Epistle here presented to the reader, and which I have translated, are taken from "*Rerum Hibernicarum Scriptores Veteres, Auctore Carolo O'Connor, S.T.D.*," and are supposed to be accurate copies of the Cottonian MSS. The second copy of the Confession, and also that of the Epistle here given, are the version adopted by the Bollandists, and are taken from "*Sancti Patricii Opuscula a J. L. Villaneuva*;" and I must beg that the reader will, in the several places in the preceding pages where the words "*Salisbury copy*" occur, substitute for them the words "*Bollandist copy*." In presenting these copies of the writings of St. Patrick to the reader, I wish to state that there are a few sentences, or parts of sentences, besides those I have already noticed, which appear to me to have been interpolated, and thereby rendered wholly inconsistent with the general tenor of his writings.

## APPENDIX C.

### QUOTATIONS FROM THE BIBLE

COTTONIAN COPY.

Δίδὼ καὶ ὁ Θεὸς αὐτὸν ὑπερύψωσε, καὶ  
ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρ πάντων  
ὀνομάτων·  
ἵνα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ πάντων γόνων  
κάμψῃ ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ  
ὑποχθονίων,  
καὶ πάντα γλώσσα ἑξομολογήσεται,  
ὅτι Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, εἰς δόξαν  
Θεοῦ Πατρὸς.

Et dedit illi omnem potestatem  
super omne nomen, cælestium et  
terrestrium et inferorum, ut omnis  
lingua confiteatur, quia Dominus et  
Deus est Jesus Christus.

κριτὴς ζώντων καὶ νεκρῶν.

Judex vivorum et mortuorum.

καὶ ἐπικαλεσαί με ἐν ἡμέρᾳ θλίψεως,  
καὶ ἐξελούμαι σε, καὶ δοξάσεις με.

Invoca me in die tribulationis  
tuæ, et liberabo te, et magnificabis  
me.

τὰ δὲ ἔργα τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀνακαλύπτειν  
ἐνδόξως.

Opera autem Dei revelare et con-  
fiteri honorificum est.

ἀπολείς πάντας τοὺς λαλοῦντας το  
ψεύδος.

Perdes eos qui loquuntur men-  
dacium.

στόμα δὲ καταψευδόμενον ἀναιρᾷ  
ψυχὴν.

Os quod mentitur occidit animam.

ὅτι πάντες ῥήματα ἄργον, ὃ ἐὰν λαλήσωσιν  
ὡς ἄνθρωποι, ἀποδώσουσι περὶ αὐτοῦ  
λόγον ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κρίσεως.

Verbum otiosum quod locuti fue-  
rint homines, reddent pro eo rationem  
in die judicii.

ἐν γὰρ λόγῳ γνωσθήσεται σοφία, καὶ  
παιδεία ἐν ῥήματι γλώσσης.

Per linguam dignoscitur et sensus  
et scientia et doctrina varietatis.

\* It will be observed how closely this quotation follows the Greek in the Cottonian and Bollandist copies. It is evident in this, as in several other instances, that the copyers corrected (as they thought) the quotations, by a reference to Jerome's translation of them.

## APPENDIX C.

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### FOUND IN THE WRITINGS OF ST. PATRICK.

BOLLANDIST COPY.	ARMAGH COPY.	JEROME'S TRANSLATION.
Et dedit illi omnem potestatem super omne nomen cælestium, terrestrium et infernorum, ut omnis lingua confiteatur quia Dominus Jesus Christus in gloria est Dei Patris.	Et dedit illi omnem potestatem super omne nomen, cælestium et terrestrium et infernorum, et omnis lingua confiteatur ei, quia Dominus et Deus est Jesus Christus.	Et donavit illi nomen, quod est super omne nomen, ut in nomine Jesu omne genu flectatur, cælestium, terrestrium, et infernorum, et omnis lingua confiteatur, quia Dominus Jesus Christus in gloria est Dei Patris. Phill. ii., 9, 10, and 11.
Judicem vivorum atque mortuorum.	Judex vivorum atque mortuorum.	Judex vivorum et mortuorum. Acts x. 42.
Invocabis me in die tribulationis tuæ, et liberabo te, et magnificabis me.	Invoca me in die tribulationis tuæ, et liberabo te, et magnificabis me.	Et invoca me in die tribulationis; eruam te, et honorificabis me. Ps. xlix. 15.
The same.	The same.	The same. Tobit xii. 7.
Perdes omnes qui loquuntur mendacium.	Perdes eos qui loquuntur mendacium.	Perdes omnes qui loquuntur mendacium. Ps. v. 7.
The same.	The same.	Os autem, quod mentitur, occidit animam. Wisd. of Sol. i. 2.
The same.	Verbum otiosum quod locuti fuerint homines reddent rationem de eo in die judicii.*	Verbum otiosum quod locuti fuerint homines reddent rationem de eo in die judicii. Matth. xii. 36.
Per linguam dignoscitur sensus et scientia et doctrina veritatis.	The same.	In lingua enim sapientia dignoscitur, et sensus, et scientia, et doctrina in verbo sensati. Ecclesiasticus iv. 29.

## COTTONIAN COPY.

καὶ δι γλώσσαις δι ψελλίζουσαι ταχὺ  
μαθήσονται λαλεῖν εἰρηνῇ.

Linguae balbutientes velociter dis-  
cent loqui pacem.

οὐ μέλανι, ἀλλὰ Πνεύματι Θεῷ  
ζῶντος.

Non atramento, sed Spiritu Dei  
vivi.

μὴ μισήσης ἐπίπονον ἐργασίαν καὶ  
γεωργίαν ὑπὸ Ὑψίστου ἐκτισμένην.

Et rusticatio ab Altissimo creata  
est.

Ὅτι γὰρ ὑμεῖς ἐστέ οἱ λαλῶντες, ἀλλὰ  
τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν, το λαλῶν  
ἐν ὑμῖν.

Non vos estis qui loquimini, sed  
Spiritus Patris vestri qui loquitur in  
vobis.

Ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα συναντι-  
λαμβάνεται ταῖς ἀσθενείαις ἡμῶν· τὸ  
γὰρ τί προσευξώμεθα καθὼς δεῖ, οὐκ  
οἶδαμεν, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ τὸ Πνεῦμα ὑπερ-  
εντυγχάνει ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν στεναγμοῖς ἀλα-  
λητοῖς.

Spiritus adjuvat infirmitatem nos-  
træ orationis. Nam quid oremus  
sicut oportet nescimus, sed ipse  
Spiritus postulat pro nobis gemitibus  
inenarrabilibus, quæ verbis exprimi  
non possunt.

Χριστὸς . . . ὃς καὶ ἐντυγχάνει ὑπὲρ  
ἡμῶν ;

Dominus advocatus noster pos-  
tulat pro nobis.

ὁτίς ὁ ἀπτόμενος ὑμῶν ὡς ὁ ἀπτόμενος  
τῆς κόρης τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ αὐτοῦ.

Qui vos tangit, quasi tangit pupil-  
lam oculi mei.

εἰς μαρτύριον πᾶσι τοῖς ἔθνεσι· καὶ  
τότε ἤξει τὸ τέλος.

In testimonium omnibus gentibus,  
ante finem mundi.

πρὸς σὲ ἔθνη ἤξουσιν ἀπ' ἐσχάτου τῆς  
γῆς, καὶ ἐροῦσιν, ὡς ψευδῇ ἐκτίσαντο  
οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν ἰδῶλα, καὶ οὐκ ἐστὶν  
ἐν αὐτοῖς ὠφέλημα.

Ad te gentes venient ab extremis  
terræ et dicent, Sicut falsa compa-  
raverunt patres nostri idola, et non  
est utilitas in eis.



BOLLANDIST COPY.	ARMAGH COPY.	JEROME'S TRANSLATION.
Linguae balbutientes velociter loqui discent pacem.	Linguae balbutientes velociter discent loqui pacem.	Lingua balborum velo- citer loquatur et plane. Isaiah xxxii. 4.
The same.	The same.	The same. 2 Cor. iii. 3.
Rusticatio ab Altis- simo creata est.	Et rusticationem ab Altissimo creata est.	Et rusticationem cre- atam ab Altissimo. Ecclesiasticus vii. 16.
The same.	Non vos estis. (The remainder of the sen- tence wanting.)	Non enim vos estis qui loquimini, sed Spiri- tus Patris vestri, qui lo- quitur in vobis. Matt. x. 20.
Spiritus adjuvat infir- mitatem orationis nos- træ : nam quid oremus, nescimus : sed ipse Spi- ritus postulat pro nobis gemitibus inenarrabili- bus, quæ verbis expri- mere non possum.	Spiritus adjuvat infir- mitates orationis nostræ. Nam quod oremus sicut oportet nescimus, sed ipse Spiritus postulat pro nobis gemitibus inenar- rabilibus, quæ verbis ex- primi non possunt.	Spiritus adjuvat infir- mitatem nostram ; nam quid oremus, sicut oportet, nescimus ; sed ipse Spiritus postulat pro no- bis gemitibus inenarra- bilibus. Rom. viii. 26.
Dominus advocatus est noster et ipse postu- lat pro nobis.	Dominus advocatus noster postulat pro no- bis.	Christus Jesus . . . qui etiam interpellat pro nobis. Rom. viii. 34.
Qui vos tangit, tangit pupillam oculi mei.	Qui vos tangit quasi qui tangit pupillam oculi mei.	Qui enim tetigerit vos, tangit pupillam oculi mei. Zach. ii. 8.
The same.		In testimonium omni- bus gentibus, et tunc veniet consummatio.— Matt. xxiv. 14.
Ab extremis terræ et dicent : Falsa compara- verunt patres nostri sibi idola, et non est utilitas in eis.	Sicut falso compara- verunt patres nostri idola, et non est utilitas gentes veniunt ad te.	Ad te gentes venient ab extremis terræ, et di- cent ; Vere mendacium possederunt patres nos- tri, vanitatem, quæ eis non profruit. Jerem. xvi. 19.

## COTTONIAN COPY.

ἰδοὺ δίδωκά σε εἰς διαθήκην γένους ἐς  
φῶς ἔθνων, τοῦ εἶναι σε εἰς σωτηρίαν  
ἕως ἰσχύτου τῆς γῆς.

Posui te lumen in Gentibus, ut sis  
in salutem usque ad extremum terræ.

ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν ἤξουσιν, καὶ  
ἀνακλιθήσονται μετὰ Ἀβραάμ καὶ  
Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ.

Venient ab oriente et occidente,  
et recumbent cum Abraham, et Isaac,  
et Jacob.

Δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου, καὶ ποιήσω ὑμᾶς  
ἀλιεῖς ἀνθρώπων.

Venite post me et faciam vos fieri  
piscatores hominum.

Ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀποστελλῶ τοὺς ἀλιεῖς τοὺς  
πολλοὺς, λέγει Κύριος, καὶ ἀλιεύσουσιν  
αὐτούς. καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἀποστελλῶ  
τοὺς πολλοὺς θηρευτὰς, καὶ θηρεύσου-  
σιν αὐτούς.

Ecce ego mitto piscatores et vena-  
tores multos, dicit Dominus, &c.

Πορευθέντες μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ  
ἔθνη, βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα  
τοῦ Πατρὸς, καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ, καὶ τοῦ  
ἀγίου Πνεύματος· Διδάσκοντες αὐτοὺς  
τηρεῖν πάντα, ὅσα ἐνετειλάμην ὑμῖν·  
καὶ ἰδοὺ, ἐγὼ μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι πάσας  
τὰς ἡμέρας, ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ  
αἰῶνος.

Euntes ergo docete omnes gentes,  
baptizantes eos in nomine Patris, et  
Filii, et Spiritus sancti, docentes eos  
observare omnia quæcunque man-  
davi vobis; et ecce Ego vobis cum  
sum omnibus diebus, usque ad con-  
summationem seculi.

Πορευθέντες εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἅπαντα,  
κηρύξατε τὸ εὐαγγέλιον πάσῃ τῇ  
κτίσει. Ὁ πιστεύσας καὶ βαπτισθεὶς,  
σωθήσεται· ὁ δὲ ἀπιστήσας κατακρι-  
θήσεται.\*

Euntes ergo in mundum universum  
prædicate Evangelium omni crea-  
turæ· Qui crediderit et baptizatus  
fuerit salvus erit. Qui vero non  
crediderit condemnabitur.

\* It is worthy of remark that this verse, as it stands in the authorised English ver-  
sion of the New Testament, upon which the advocates of adult baptism lay so much  
stress, is not correctly translated from the original Greek.

BOLLANDIST COPY.

ARMAGH COPY.

JEROME'S TRANSLATION.

Posui te in lucem gentibus, ut sis salus mea usque ad ultimum terræ.

The same as in the Cottonian Copy.

Ecce dedi te in lucem gentium, ut sis salus mea, usque ad extremum terræ. Isaiah xlix. 6.

The same.

Venient ab oriente et occidente ab austro et ab aquilone et recumbent cum Abraham, et Isaac, et Jacob.

Ab oriente et occidente venient, et recumbent cum Abraham, et Isaac, et Jacob. Matth. viii. 11.

Venite post me, faciam vos fieri piscatores hominum.

The same as in the Cottonian Copy.

The same. Matth. iv. 19.

The same.

The same.

Ecce ego mittam piscatores multos, dicit Dominus, &c. Jerem. xvi. 16.

Euntes ergo docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti: docentes eos servare omnia quæcunque dixero vobis. Et ecce ego vobiscum sum omnibus diebus usque ad consummationem sæculi.

Euntes ergo nunc docete omnes gentes baptizantes eos in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti usque ad terminum sæculi.

Euntes ergo docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti: docentes eos servare omnia quæcunque mandavi vobis. Et ecce ego vobiscum sum omnibus diebus, usque ad consummationem sæculi. Matth. xxviii. 19, 20.

Euntes in mundum universum, prædicate Evangelium omni creaturæ. Qui crediderit, et baptizatus fuerit, salvus erit.

The same as in the Cottonian Copy.

Euntes in mundum universum prædicate Evangelium omni creaturæ. Qui crediderit, et baptizatus fuerit, salvus erit: qui vero non crediderit, condemnabitur. Mark xvi. 15, 16.

COTTONIAN COPY.

Καὶ κηρυχθήσεται τοῦτο το ἑαγγέλιον  
τῆς βασιλείας ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ οἰκουμένῃ,  
εἰς μαρτύριον πᾶσι τοῖς ἔθνεσι· καὶ  
τότε ἔξει τὸ τέλος.

Καὶ ἔσται μετὰ ταῦτα, καὶ ἐκχεῶ ἀπὸ  
τοῦ πνεύματός μου ἐπὶ πᾶσαν σάρκα,  
καὶ προφητευσουσιν οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν καὶ  
οἱ θυγατέρες ὑμῶν, καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι  
ὑμῶν ἐνύπνια ἐνυπνιασθήσονται, καὶ  
οἱ νεανίσκοι ὑμῶν ὁράσεις ὄψονται,  
καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς δούλους μου καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς  
δούλας ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις ἐκχεῶ  
ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος μου.

Κάλεσον τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, ὃν λαός  
μου. διότι ὑμεῖς ὃν λαός μου, καὶ ἐγὼ  
ὄκ ἐμι ὑμῶν. . . καὶ ἔσται, ἐν  
τῷ τόπῳ ὃν ἔρριψεν αὐτοῖς, οὐ λαός  
μου ὑμεῖς, κληθήσονται καὶ αὐτοὶ υἱοὶ  
θεοῦ ζῶντος.

Ὑἱὸς σοφὸς ἐμφραίνει πατέρα.

Ἐπίρριψον ἐπὶ κύριον τὴν μέριμνά  
σου, καὶ ἀντὶς σε διαθήσεται.

Τί ανταποδώσω τῷ κυρίῳ περὶ πάντων  
ὧν ἀνταπέδωκέ μοι.

οἱ κατέβησαντες τὸν λαόν μου βρώσει  
ἄρτου.

Καιρὸς τοῦ ποιῆσαι τῷ κυρίῳ, διεσκε-  
δασαν τὸν νόμον σου.

Ὅσα εἰδὼς δῆροτε ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, ἔσται  
δεδεμένα ἐν τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ.

Ὅκ εὐδοκεῖ ὁ Ὑψίστος ἐν προσφοραῖς  
ἀσεβῶν, οὐδέ ἐν πληθύνει θυσιῶν ἐξι-  
λασκεται ἁμαρτίας. Θύων ὕψιν ἔναντι  
τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ ὁ προσάγων θυσιῶν  
ἐκ χρημάτων πενήτων.

Prædicabitur hoc Evangelium  
regni in universo mundo, in testi-  
monium omnibus gentibus, et tunc  
veniet finis.

Et erit in novissimis diebus, dicit  
Dominus, effundam de Spiritu meo  
super omnem carnem, et propheta-  
bunt filii vestri et filiae vestrae, et  
filii vestri visiones videbunt, et seni-  
ores vestri somnia somniabunt. Et  
quidem super servos meos, et super  
ancillas meas in diebus illis effundam  
de Spiritu meo, et prophetabunt.

Vocabo non plebem meam, ple-  
bem meam, et non misericordiam  
consecutam, misericordiam conse-  
cutam, et erit in loco ubi dictum  
est, non plebs mea vos, ubi voca-  
buntur filii Dei vivi.

Quia filius sapiens gloria patris  
est.

Jacta cogitatum tuum in Deum,  
et ipse te enutriet.

Unde autem retribuam illi pro  
omnibus quæ retribuit mihi?

Devorantes plebem Domini, ut  
cibum panis.

Iniqui dissipaverunt legem tuam  
Domine.

Quos ligarent super terram, ligatos  
esse et in cœlis.

Dona iniquorum reprobant Altis-  
simus, qui offert sacrificium ex sub-  
stantia pauperum, quasi qui victimat  
filium in conspectu patris sui.

DOLLANDIST COPY.

The same.

Et erit in novissimis diebus, dicit Dominus, effundam de Spiritu meo super omnem carnem, et prophetabunt filii vestri, et filiae vestrae, et seniores vestri somnia somniant. Et quidem super servos meos et ancillas meas in diebus illis effundam de Spiritu meo, et prophetabunt.

The same.

The same.

Jacta cogitatum tuum in Dominum, et ipse te enutriet.

The same.

The same.

The same.

The same.

Dona enim iniquorum reprobant Altissimus: et qui offert sacrificium ex substantia pauperis, quasi qui victimat filium in conspectu patris.

JEROME'S TRANSLATION.

Et prædicabitur hoc Evangelium regni in universo orbe, in testimonium omnibus gentibus: et tunc veniet consummatio. Matt. xxiv. 14.

Et erit post hæc; effundam Spiritum meum super omnem carnem: et prophetabunt filii vestri, et filiae vestrae; senes vestri somnia somniant, et juvenes vestri visiones videbunt. Sed et super servos meos et ancillas in diebus illis effundam spiritum meum. Joel ii. 28, 29.

Voca nomen ejus: Non populus meus: quia vos non populus meus, et ego non ero vester. . . . Et erit in loco ubi dicetur eis: Non populus meus vos; dicetur eis, Filii Dei viventis. Osee i. 9, 10.

Filius sapiens lætificat patrem. Prov. xv. 20.

Jacta super Dominum curam tuam, et ipse te enutriet. Psalm liv. 23.

Quid retribuam Domino, pro omnibus quæ retribuit mihi? Psalm cxiv. 12.

Qui devorant plebem meam sicut escam panis. Psalm xlii. 4.

Tempus faciendi, Domine, dissipaverunt legem tuam. Psalm cxviii. 126.

Quæcunque alligaveritis super terram, erunt ligata et in cælo. Matt. xviii. 18.

Dona iniquorum non probat Altissimus, . . . Qui offert sacrificium ex substantia pauperum, quasi qui victimat filium in conspectu patris sui. Ecclesiasticus xxxiv. 23, 24.

COTTONIAN COPY.

Πλούτος ἀδικῶς συναγόμενος ἐξεμε-  
θήσεται, ἐξ οἰκίας αὐτοῦ ἐξελεύσει  
αὐτὸν ἀγγέλως. θυμὸν δὲ δρακόντων  
σηλάσειεν, ἀνέλοι δὲ αὐτὸν γλώσσα  
ὀφews. . . . κατέδετα αὐτὸν πῦρ  
ἀκαστον.

Ὅυαί ὁ πληθύνων ἑαυτῷ τὰ ὑκ ὄντα  
αὐτοῦ ἕως τίνος.

Τί γὰρ ὠφελεῖται ἄνθρωπος, εἰὰ τὸν  
κόσμον ὅλον κερδήσῃ, τὴν δὲ ψυχὴν  
αὐτοῦ ζημιωθῇ.

Ὅυκ ἐπιθυμήσεις . . . ὅυτε ὅσα τῷ  
πλησίον σου ἐστὶ.

Ὅυ φονεύσεις.

Πᾶς ὁ μισῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ,  
ἀνθρωποκτόνος ἐστὶ.

Ὅ μη ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἀδελφον, μένει ἐν τῷ  
θανάτῳ.

Προφήτης ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ πατρίδι τιμὴν  
ὅυκ ἔχει.

Ὅ μὴ ὦν μετ' ἐμοῦ, κατ' ἐμοῦ ἐστὶ καὶ  
ὁ μὴ συνάγων μετ' ἐμοῦ, σκορπίζει.

Ἐῖς οἰκοδομῶν, καὶ εἰς καὶαιρῶν, τί  
ὠφέλησαν πλεῖον ἢ κόποις;

Ὅς δίκαιον κρίνει τὸν ἄδικον, ἄδικον  
δὲ τὸν δίκαιον, ἀκάθαρτος καὶ βδελυκ-  
τὸς παρὰ θεῷ.

Ὅτινες τὸ δίκαιωμα τοῦ Θεοῦ επιγ-  
νόντες, ὅτι οἱ τὰ τοιαῦτα πρᾶσσοντες  
ἄξιοι θανάτου εἰσιν, ὅν μόνον αὐτα  
ποιοῦσιν, ἄλλα καὶ συννευδοκοῦσι τοῖς  
πρᾶσσουσιν.

Divitiæ, quas congregabit injustus,  
evomentur de ventre ejus; trahit  
illum Angelus mortis. Ira Draconum  
multabitur, interficiet illum lingua  
colubri. Comedet autem eum ignis  
inextinguibilis.

Væ qui replent se quæ non sunt  
sua.

Quid protest homini, ut totum  
mundum lucretur, et animæ suæ  
detrimentum patiatur?

Non concupisces rem proximi tui.

Non occides.

Qui odit fratrem suum, homicida  
adscribitur.

Qui non diligit fratrem suum in  
morte manet.

Propheta in patria sua honorem  
non habet.

Qui non est mecum, contra me  
est, et qui non congregat mecum,  
spargit.

Unus destruit, alter ædificat.

Quamobrem injuria justorum non  
tibi placeat, etiam usque ad inferos  
non placebit.

Non solum facientes mala, sed  
etiam consentientes damnandi sunt.

## BOLLANDIST COPY.

Divitiæ, quas congregavit injuste, evomentur de ventre ejus, angelus mortis trahit illum, ira draconum mulcabitur, interficiet illum lingua colubri, comedet eum ignis inextinguibilis.

Væ qui replent se his quæ non sunt sua.

Et quid prodest homini, si totum mundum lucretur, se autem ipsum perdat, et detrimentum animæ suæ patiatur?

The same.

The same.

Qui enim odit fratrem suum, homicida esse adscribitur.

Qui non diligit fratrem suum manet in morte.

The same.

The same.

The same.

Qui propter injuriam justorum non te placat, Domine, etiam usque ad inferos non placabit.

This quotation is not in the Bollandist Copy.

## JEROME'S TRANSLATION.

Divitias, quas devoravit, evomet, et de ventre illius extrahet eas Deus. Caput aspidum suget, et occidet eum lingua viperæ. . . . devorabit eum ignis qui non succenditur. Job xx. 15, 16, 26.

Væ ei qui multiplicat non sua. Habacuc ii. 6.

Quid enim prodest homini, si mundum universum lucretur, animæ vero suæ detrimentum patiatur? Matt. xvi. 26.

Non concupisces domum proximi tui . . . nec omnia quæ illius sunt. Exod. xx. 17.

The same. Exod. xx. 13.

Omnis qui odit fratrem suum, homicida est. 1 John iii. 15.

Qui non diligit, manet in morte. 1 John iii. 14.

Propheta in sua patria honorem non habet. John iv. 44.

The same. Matt. xii. 30.

Unus ædificans, et unus destruens, quid prodest illis, nisi labor? Ecclesiasticus xxxiv. 28.

Qui justificat impium, et qui condemnat justum, abominabilis est uterque apud Deum. Prov. xvii. 15.

Qui talia agunt, digni sunt morte: et non solum qui ea faciunt, sed etiam qui consentiunt facientibus. Rom. i. 32.

## COTTONIAN COPY.

Καὶ κλαίειν μετὰ κλαίοντων.

Flete cum flentibus.

Καὶ εἴτε πάσχει ἐν μέλος, συμπάσχει  
πάντα τὰ μέλη· εἴτε δοξάζεται ἐν  
μῖλος, συγχαίρει πάντα τὰ μέλη·

Si dolet unum membrum, condo-  
leant omnia membra.

Εἰς Κύριος, μία πίστις, ἐν βάπτισμα·

Unum baptismum percipimus, vel  
unum Deum patrem habemus.

Ὁυχὶ πατὴρ εἰς πάντων ὑμῶν; οὐχὶ  
Θεὸς εἰς ἕκτισεν ὑμᾶς; τί οὖν ἐγκατε-  
λίπετε ἕκαστος τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ.

Unum Deum patrem habemus.  
Nonne unum Deum habetis? Quid  
dereliquistis unus quisque proximum  
suum?

Καὶ ὁ θάνατος οὐκ ἔσται ἔτι, οὐτε  
πένθος, οὐτε κραυγὴ οὐτε πόνος οὐκ  
ἔσται ἔτι· . . νῦν γὰρ οὐκ ἔσται  
ἐκί·

Ubi nox non erit, neque luctus,  
neque mors amplius.

Καὶ ἐξελεύσεται, καὶ σκιρτήσετε ὡς  
μοσχάρια ἐκ δεσμῶν ἀναιμία. καὶ  
καταπατήσετε ἀνόμους, διότι ἔσονται  
ποδοὶ ὑποκάτω των ποδῶν ὑμῶν.

Exultabitis sicut vituli ex vinculis  
resoluti, et conculcabit iniquos, et  
erunt cinis sub pedibus vestris.

—ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν ἤξουσιν,  
καὶ ανακλιθήσονται μετὰ Ἀβραὰμ καὶ  
Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ των  
οὐρανῶν.

Venient ab oriente et occidente, et  
recumbent cum Abraham et Isaac  
et Jacob, in regno cælorum.

Ἐξω οἱ κύνες καὶ οἱ φαρμακοὶ καὶ οἱ  
πόρνοι καὶ οἱ φονεῖς καὶ οἱ ἐιδωλολά-  
τραι, καὶ πᾶς ὁ φιλῶν καὶ ποιῶν  
ψευδός.

Foris canes, et venefici, et homi-  
cidæ, et mendaces perjuri.

—τὸ μέρος αὐτῶν ἐν τῇ λίμνῃ τῇ  
καιομένῃ πυρὶ καὶ θείῳ.

Pars eorum in stagnum ignis  
æterni.

Καὶ εἰ ὁ δίκαιος μόλις σώζεται, ὁ ἀσε-  
βῆς καὶ ἁμαρτωλὺς ποῦ φανίται.

Ubi justus vix salvus erit; peccator  
et impius transgressor legis, ubi se  
recognoscit?

Ὁ πιστεύσας καὶ βαπτισθεὶς, σωθή-  
σεται· ὁ δὲ ἀπιστήσας, κατακριθή-  
σεται.

Qui crediderit salvus erit, qui vero  
non crediderit, condemnabitur.



## BOLLANDIST COPY.

Flere cum flentibus.

Si dolet unum membrum, condolent omnia membra.

Unum baptismum percepimus, et unum Deum habemus.

This quotation is not in the Bollandist Copy.

Ubi nox non erit, neque luctus, neque mors erit amplius.

Exultabitis sicut vituli resoluti, et conculcabitis iniquos et erunt cinis sub pedibus vestris.

The same.

Foris canes, et venefici, et homicidæ, et mendaces et perjuri.

Pars eorum in stagno ignis æterni.

Ubi justus vix salvus erit, peccator, et impius, et transgressor legis ubi se recognoscet?

Et qui crediderint salvi erunt; qui vero non crediderint, condemnabitur.

## JEROME'S TRANSLATION.

Flere cum flentibus. Rom. xii. 15.

Et si quid patitur unum membrum, compatiuntur omnia membra. 1 Cor. xii. 26.

Unus Dominus, una fides, unum baptismum. Ephes. iv. 5.

Numquid non Pater unus omnium nostrum? numquid non Deus unus creavit nos? quare ergo despicit unusquisque nostrum fratrem suum? Malach. ii. 10.

Et mors ultra non erit, neque luctus, neque clamor, neque dolor erit ultra. . . . nox enim non erit illic. Apocal. xxi. 4, 25.

Et egrediemini, et salietis sicut vituli de armento. Et calcabitis impios, cum fuerint cinis sub planta pedum vestrorum. Malach. iv. 2, 3.

Ab oriente et occidente venient, et recumbent cum Abraham et Isaac et Jacob in regno cœlorum. Matt. viii. 11.

Foris canes, et venefici, et impudici, et homicidæ, et idolis servientes, et omnis qui amat et facit mendacium. Apocal. xxii. 15.

Pars illorum erit in stagno ardenti igne et sulphure. Apocal. xxi. 8.

Et si justus vix salvabitur, impius et peccator ubi parebunt? 1 Peter iv. 18.

Qui crediderit, et baptizatus fuerit, salvus erit: qui vero non crediderit, condemnabitur. Mark xvi. 16.

NOTE.—It is evident that these quotations from the Holy Scriptures have not been taken from Jerome's translation of them: and there are, moreover, among them, two or three passages quoted by the Saint, which have been so very incorrectly translated by him, that it is quite apparent that they could not have been copied from *any other* Latin translation of them. There is so very great an amount of prejudice and misconception on the subject of the history of the Saint to overcome, that, at the risk of appearing to be tedious and prolix in this matter, I must here again reiterate the arguments to prove, and press upon the reader the absolute certainty of the fact, that St. Patrick read the Scriptures in the Greek language alone, and that he was not possessed of, nor had any knowledge of, *any* Latin translation of them. There is no fact connected with the history of the Saint of which we have such abundant and indisputable proof. It may be necessary to state, for the information of some of my readers, that in the days of St. Patrick the only languages in which the Scriptures were written were the Hebrew (the knowledge of which was confined almost entirely to the Jews), and the Greek. The Greek, then, was the only language from which it was possible for the Saint to have translated them into Latin; and of the fact that he did so we have the fullest and clearest proof. It is proved by his own assertion in the Epistle to Coroticus, when, speaking of his quotations from the Scriptures, he says—"These are not my words, but the words of God, and of the Apostles and Prophets who never lied, *which I have translated into Latin.*" It is proved also by the quotations themselves. His imperfect knowledge of the Latin language forms another proof of it. And, further, it is proved by a passage in the Confession already cited, and which I here again repeat—"Quapropter olim cogitavi scribere, sed et usque nunc hæsitavi. Timui enim ne inciderem in linguam hominum. Quia non didici sicut et cæteri qui optime itaque jure et sacras literas utroque pari modo combiberunt, et sermones illorum ex infantia nunquam mutarunt, sed magis ad perfectum semper addiderunt. Nam sermo et loquela nostra translata est in linguam alienam, sicut facile potest probari ex saliva scripturæ meæ."—"Wherefore, I formerly thought to write, but hesitated even until now. For I feared lest I should fall under the censure of men, because I did not learn as others, who being taught in the best manner, therefore rightly, *in both ways* (utroque) both drank in sacred learning in a proper manner, and never changed their language from childhood, but rather constantly added to its perfection. For my language and speech is translated into a foreign tongue, as may be easily observed from the homely style of my writing." It is evident, beyond the possibility of a doubt on the subject, that the Saint is here, as I have already had occasion to remark, framing an excuse for his inability to write correctly, and express himself clearly, in the Latin language; and amongst the reasons urged by him for his incompetency, the first and principal is, that he "had not, *in both ways, drank in sacred learning,*"—that is, that he had not learned the Sacred Scriptures in both the *Greek* and the *Latin* languages, the only languages in which it was possible (as we may leave the Hebrew out of the question) for him to have learned them. It is quite certain, then, that he had not in his youth read and studied the Scriptures in the Latin language, and almost equally certain that he had not been able, even up till the close of a long life, to obtain a Latin translation of them. If he had been possessed of a Latin Bible when he wrote the Epistle to Coroticus, or at the time when he wrote

his Confession, which was probably not long before his death, his imperfect acquaintance with that language would only have had the effect of causing him to adhere the more strictly to the text in his quotations from it. Now, these facts alone are sufficient to upset the whole story of his mission in the fifth century. We are told, and we can have no hesitation in believing, that when "Pope Celestine ordained Palladius a bishop, and sent him into the island of Hibernia, he gave him the volumes of the Old and New Testaments,"\* which, we cannot doubt, were Latin copies of the Scriptures; and we are further informed that "Palladius left his books which he had received from St. Celestine in Cellfine," one of the churches which he built in Ireland, where they are said to have been preserved for several centuries. Although we have these statements, which are very probably true, before us, and the truth of which, considering the date at which they are said to have occurred, we cannot dispute, we are, notwithstanding statements made by St. Patrick himself, which lead to the certain conclusion that he never had in his possession, or been able to procure, a Latin Bible, asked to believe that he was the immediate successor of Palladius!!

\* St. Patrick, Apostle of Ireland, by J. Henthorn Todd, D.D., p. 294.



# ERRATA.

Page 28, line 20, for 413 read 431.

- |             |     |                                    |
|-------------|-----|------------------------------------|
| " 75, "     | 34, | omit the words " deacon, or of a." |
| " 97, Note, |     |                                    |
| " 103, "    |     |                                    |
| " 105, "    |     |                                    |
| " 106, "    |     |                                    |
| " 108, "    |     |                                    |
| " 120, "    |     |                                    |
- } for "Salisbury copy" read "Bollandist copy."
- " 149, line 3, for " enutriut" read " enutriet."
- " 157, " 25, for " Wisd. of Sol. i. 2" read "Wisd. of Sol. i. 11."
- " 158, " 3, for Θεδν read Θεδν.
- " " " 5, for μισήσης read μισήσης.
- " 162, " 3, for ἔθνεσι read ἔθνεσι.
- " " " 9, for ἐνύπνια read ἐνύπνια.
- " 164, " 27, for Δεῶ read Θεῶ.
- " 166, " 14, for ἀνείμια read ἀνείμια.

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